

## Joint City-County Planning Task Force

Meeting Notes

July 09, 2014 - 9:30 a.m.

Greene County Archives & Election Center - 1126 Boonville Ave.

Meeting #21

Task Force Members present:

Tim Smith, Greene County Administrator  
Greg Burris, Springfield City Manager  
Cindy Stein, Greene County Auditor  
Dan Patterson, Greene County Prosecutor  
Jerry Moyer, Greene County Court Administrator  
Jim Arnott, Greene County Sheriff

The meeting began at 9:35 a.m. with a welcome from Greg Burris, Springfield City Manager. Mr. Burris asked the members to review the notes from the June 25, 2014 meeting, and asked for a motion of approval. Cindy Stein, Greene County Auditor, made a motion to approve the notes. Jerry Moyer, Greene County Court Administrator, seconded the motion and the notes were approved.

Tim Smith, Greene County Administrator, gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Consolidated Functions." Mr. Smith reminded the Task Force of their charge to look at the topic and determine the parameters without making formal recommendations. The "Idea Starter Suggestion" for this topic states: *"The time seems right to consider future consolidation of city and county functions, such as Planning and Development, Public Works, Law Enforcement and others. This might be the first step towards combined government. Additionally, the time may be right for the County to consider Charter form of government. It would appear there would be savings associated with combining some of the functions within County government."* This topic was suggested by a citizen and sponsored by Mayor Stephens.

Greene County is a non-charter form of government, falling under Missouri State Statutes. The City of Springfield is a charter government using "council-manager government". There is no constitutional authority to merge a county government and a city government in Missouri. Currently there are a number of City and County services that are consolidated through agreements. These services include: the Health Department, 9-1-1, Emergency Management, Parks, and the Library. Harold Bengsch, Greene County Commissioner, explained how efforts to combine the Health Department began in the late 1950's. It was consolidated into one department in 1977, twenty years later. This consolidation was primarily the first of its kind. Today a few other communities are beginning to implement this model.

In addition to consolidated functions/services, there are also cooperative services between the City and County. One such service is the relationship between the City's Public Works Department and the Greene County Highway Department. Dan Smith, Greene County Highway Administrator, explained how these two departments work together in coordinating snow plowing, sharing the salt storage facility, and using cost-share methods on construction projects.

Economic Development is another area of cooperation. The City, County, and the Chamber of Commerce work jointly on efforts to bring new businesses and development to the community. Mr. Burris noted the good working relationships already established between these entities. Many other cities and counties do not have this type of cooperation. The partnership has created a type of "one-stop-shop" where all entities can work with each other.

Mr. Smith continued the presentation by explaining the purpose and future of consolidating functions. As stated in the PowerPoint, consolidation leads to improved delivery of services, consistency in services and regulatory programs, improved efficiency and elimination of duplication. Mr. Burris noted that there is currently a struggle for stormwater funding at both the City and County. Since there is no funding source, there is no money for projects. With this in mind, a combined funding source for both the City and County Stormwater Departments might be considered. Mr. Smith stated that stormwater funding would need to be a combined effort, not just for the City or County alone, but for both entities.

Mr. Smith asked Commissioner Bengsch if there had been a noted reduction of cost in consolidating the Health Department. Commissioner Bengsch explained that the cost somewhat balanced itself out. While there were increases in cost to cover equalizing the pay scale, there were reduced costs in other areas. For example, with consolidation the Purchasing Departments and Administrative Departments could both be reduced to one department instead of two separate departments. Roseann Bentley, Greene County Commissioner, noted that for citizens it is easier to have only one entity to turn to, ultimately making this a benefit to the taxpayer. Dan Patterson, Greene County Prosecutor, stated it could also improve customer service. Commissioner Bengsch used the example of the Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program in which case people did not have to be concerned as to whether they lived inside or outside the city to receive services.

Next Mr. Smith discussed the individual functions of the City and the County, and functions/services which are provided by both organizations. Services which are provided by both include: Law Enforcement, Planning and Zoning, Building Regulations, Stormwater Services, Streets/Bridges, and the various support services needed to maintain personnel and building operations. In 2010, the Springfield Police Department and the Greene County Sheriff's Office researched consolidating services. In the same year Building Plan Review and Inspections also considered consolidation.

In regard to consolidating Building Plan Review and Inspections, Mr. Smith stated that while it would be difficult to implement, it would not be impossible and should still be considered. Mr. Burris said it was important to note that these services were really not duplicated because each department inspects according to geographic area depending upon whether the location is inside the City or outside the city limits.

Sheriff Arnott asked whether the Courts and Prosecutor's Office could function as one. Mr. Patterson stated they could not consolidate function-wise, but could possibly consolidate their location. Mr. Smith agreed that this had been previously discussed but was not implemented in part due to the major issue of parking. Chris Coulter, Greene County Director of Resource Management, stated that construction of a parking garage had been researched; however at \$16,000 per space it was not feasible at the time. Mr. Smith added that it was in 2006-2007 when the garage had been considered. Mr. Smith referred the Task Force to the following handouts for additional information: the Lowther Johnson letter from 2009; the 2010 Citizens Law Enforcement Merger Study; and the May 20, 2011 memorandum to the Members of the Citizen's Law Enforcement Merger Study Group.

Mr. Smith explained the Urban Service Boundary which was first established in 1981. In 1994, if a subdivision was developed outside the city limits but within this established boundary, the developer had to sign an agreement to annex. However, residential areas operate as a deficit to the City because they do not provide an offset to revenue; therefore the City has taken a position against annexation. There continues to be an issue in the manner the boundary was drawn. Since the boundary outline does not follow an obvious pattern it can be difficult to determine whether a property is inside or outside the city limits or within the Urban Service Boundary. In 2003, there was an initiative to "square up" the boundary. This proposal was taken before the voters but failed.

Next Mr. Smith further explained the differences between a charter versus non-charter form of government. Currently Greene County is a first class, non-charter county. To form a charter, the requirements set forth in the Missouri Constitution, Article VI, Section 18(a) must be followed. Of these requirements, a county must have a population of at least 85,000 or have a first class status for at least two years. Greene County became a first class county on January 1, 1975, after meeting the statute requirements which included having an assessed valuation of \$600 million. As a non-charter county, there are 13 elected officials who follow the duties/authorities as prescribed for each office by the state statutes. Traditional functions of county government include: tax collection, law enforcement, elections, record keeping and archives, and guardian/conservator for disabled, deceased, and minors. The county commission serves as the executive body of the county, acting under the authority and duties of Chapter 49 RSMo. There are numerous “modern” functions which have been added to the Greene County government over the years. The first being Emergency Management in 1950 and the latest addition is that of the County Administrator which was added in 2008.

Mr. Smith continued by explaining the limitations and structure of charter county government stating that in 2005 Assistant County Counselor John Housley, compiled “A Comparison of the Structure and Functions of Statutory versus Constitutional Charter First Class County Government” which explains the process. To summarize these limitations it states that there is no constitutional authority to merge county government and city government in Missouri; it cannot change a county’s legal standing as a subdivision of the state; and a county must continue to perform the duties imposed by the state on all first class counties. Missouri State Statutes provide two alternatives for adopting a county charter government – Article VI, Section 18 (a)-(l) or Article VI, Section 18 (m)-(r). The first is a petition initiated by the citizens and the second an act initiated by the county commission. To adopt a constitutional home rule charter, a charter commission is formed after receipt of petition. After following specifications and approved by a majority of voters, certified copies of the charter and ratification are then filed with the Secretary of State.

Mr. Smith stated that St. Charles County was a model for charter government. While there are still a number of elected officials in charter government, some positions are combined, eliminated, or restructured. In addition, it has the power to impose three taxes:

- 1.) Gross receipts of public utilities in the unincorporated county up to 5% maximum;
- 2.) Motor vehicle license tax in unincorporated areas -- same rates as can be imposed by municipalities; and
- 3.) Cigarette tax not to exceed 2.5 mils per cigarette.

Mr. Burris asked whether the County Commission could impose this type of government. Mr. Smith stated it would be up to the citizens to petition a vote for the change. In the past one had been petitioned but was defeated at election.

Mr. Burris noted three observations from the presentation:

- 1.) In regard to functional consolidation, Springfield and Greene County are already doing more than any other community within the state;
- 2.) There is a lot of complexity when it comes to consolidation; and
- 3.) There could be potential for unintended consequences and costs associated with consolidation.

Mr. Patterson asked Mr. Burris the status of the combined courthouse. Mr. Burris stated there is a schematic architectural design, but the location was yet to be determined. Currently there is no funding for it, but the City is considering the possibility of leasing space to the County. In September, contingent upon the Governor not vetoing the proposal, both the City and the County will begin to collect a \$10 court fee for each case. Mr. Burris stated this would cover approximately 23% of the courthouse cost, and they are looking for additional sources of revenue. Mr. Patterson added that the anticipated collection of the court fee for the County would be approximately \$70,000 in 2015.

Once discussion on functional consolidation had concluded, Mr. Burris revisited the discussion on legislative matters and tax exemptions covered in the June 11, 2014 meeting. More official numbers of the tax exemptions have been released. The revised amount is around \$8 million. The City intends to use an independent model to determine the fiscal impacts of the exemptions and convert the numbers into something easily understood by the citizens. Various scenarios explaining the impact to services, particularly police and fire, will be shown. Mr. Burris explained that the City owed it to the delegation to show the impacts on the community, including the objection to loss of local control and loss of revenue. In addition, the City will not be able to honor the commitments to the citizens who initially approved the taxes.

Mr. Patterson asked what percentage of revenue loss Greene County would experience. Ms. Stein stated it would be approximately 10% in the General Revenue Fund.

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 6, 2014 at 8:30 a.m., in the fourth floor conference room of the Busch Building, 840 Boonville Ave. The tentative topic will be Civic Engagement. Mr. Smith stated that a draft of the report would be ready in about two weeks for the members to review. An anticipated release of the full report should be available at the end of August.

With no additional discussion, the meeting dismissed at approximately 10:50 a.m.

# **Study of Feasibility of Combining Development Review & Permitting Services for the City of Springfield and Greene County, Missouri**

## **Report of Ad Hoc Committee**

May 3, 2010

### **Part I: General Information**

#### ***Charge to Committee***

- \$ To determine the practicality of combining City and County development review services and what internal organizational modifications might be needed within either or both organizations regarding this topic to increase service and/or efficiencies.
- \$ To provide a brief, written analysis of the group's process and recommendations.

#### ***Committee Members***

Chris Coulter, Director, Greene County Resource Management Department  
Ralph Rognstad, Director, City of Springfield Department of Planning & Development  
Tim Rosenbury, Butler Rosenbury & Partners, Chairman, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Chris Straw, Acting Director, City of Springfield Building Development Services  
Tim Smith, County Administrator, Chairman

#### ***Committee Process***

The Committee met weekly from February 8 through March 22, 2010, with the final report reviewed by the Committee on April 19 and April 26, 2010. The goal was to complete the initial review and report to the City Manager and County Commission by the first week of April. Meeting agendas and summaries are included in the appendix.

#### ***Services Considered for Combination***

The Committee considered a list of City and County services related to development review. After review, it was decided to limit the study to the area of ***building plan review and inspection***. The following table shows the services considered and the reasons why the committee elected not to include them in its scope of work.

<b>Services Considered</b>		
<b>Service</b>	<b>Include in current Scope</b>	<b>Reason why or why not.</b>
Building plan review& inspection	Yes	Building codes are the same with minor exceptions
Subdivision plat review	No	Subdivision regulations and review processes are similar. This function would be the next logical area to consider combining.
Building & zoning enforcement	No	Differences in process due to City being a charter government and County a non-charter government
Zoning case review	No	Zoning ordinances have significant differences
Plan review for public improvements	No	Standards are similar
Housing programs	No	County has no formal program
Economic development	No	City and County collaborate through Chamber

### ***Other Joint City & County Operations***

The City and County already have several joint departments listed in the table below:

<b>Department</b>	<b>How Organized/Managed</b>
Library	Funded by dedicated property tax, independent nine-member Board of Trustees, five members appointed by the Mayor, four members appointed by the County Commission.
Health Department	Administers public health programs in City and County, staff under City personnel system, funding included in both City and County budgets.
Parks Department	Under direction of nine-member Park Board with five members appointed by City Council and four members by County Commission, staff under City personnel system, 49 % funded by county-wide parks sales tax, 16% from City property tax and General Revenue, and the remainder from fees and grants tax.
Watershed Committee of the Ozarks	Jointly funded by the City, County and City Utilities, managed by as six-member Board with one appointee each from the three funding partners and three citizen members.
Emergency Management	Funded from City and County general revenue. Staff under direct management by County by agreement.

## **Part II: Comparison of City and County Building Permit & Inspection Services**

### ***1. Ordinances and Regulations***

#### **City of Springfield**

The City requires certification of electrical, plumbing, gas and mechanical contractors for all residential and commercial construction. The Building Development Services Department is the enforcement arm of the City for the building codes, the zoning ordinance, floodplain management ordinance and dangerous building ordinance. Plan review in the City is coordinated by the Building Development Services Department and involves among the Planning & Development, Public Works, Legal, Building Development Service, Fire and Health Departments. A table showing comparison of adopted City and County building codes is shown below.

## Greene County

Greene County is a first class non-charter county under Missouri Statutes. The County Commission has established a five-member Building Commission to review and adjudicate appeals of the building code. Building, planning and zoning and floodplain management services are all included in the Resource Management Department under the supervision of the department director. The Resource Management Department operates under the elected office of the County Commission and reports to the County Administrator.

<b>Summary of Adopted Building Codes</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>
2006 International Building Code (IBC)	Yes	Yes
2006 International Residential Building Code (IRC)	Yes	Yes
2006 International Plumbing Code (IPC)	Yes	Yes
2006 International Mechanical Code (IMC)	Yes	Yes
2006 International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC)	Yes	Yes
2005 National Electrical Code (NEC)	Yes	Yes
2006 International Fire Code (IFC)	Yes*	No

\* Adopted through Springfield Fire Department



### Primary Differences

- \$ City ordinance requires licensed plumbing, electrical and mechanical contractors, the County does not.
- \$ City inspections are made by trade specialty, with electrical, mechanical, plumbing and building inspectors performing only those specialty inspections. The County does not have specialized inspectors.
- \$ The City does not require residential house plans. The County requires a floor plan. The County also requires a site plan for homes with septic systems.
- \$ In addition to enforcing the building ordinances, City Building Development Services serves as the enforcement arm for the zoning and floodplain ordinances and provides review and inspection for on-site stormwater facilities and detention basins, as well as erosion and sediment control for sites less than one acre in size.
- \$ Legal procedures for enforcement differ in the City and County due to their differing governing structures under State law.

## ***2. Development Review & Permitting Procedures***

### City of Springfield

Floor plans are not required for single family and duplex structures. However, a site plan must be submitted and reviewed.

The City has a Cooperative Permitting Process for commercial projects. Plan review is tracked with a central database. Plan review progress is posted on-line so that it can be monitored by developers and consultants. New building projects are initiated with a mandatory pre-application conference where the applicant and/or their consultant(s) review the proposed project with representatives of BDS, Planning, Public Works (stormwater, traffic, sanitary services), Health and Fire Departments and City Utilities as needed. (Note: Effective April 1, 2010, the pre-application conference will be voluntary.) Final development plans for Planned Developments (PDs) are reviewed and approved by the Administrative Review Committee consisting of the directors of the Public Works, Planning and Building Development Services departments. Plan reviews are coordinated by the Plan Reviewer in BDS. Since the BDS department enforces the zoning ordinance, review of zoning requirements are performed by BDS in consultation with the Planning Department.

Re-development projects follow a similar but separate procedure in the City and are coordinated by an engineer assigned to these projects.

### Greene County

A formal plan review is not required for single family and duplex projects. Building Regulations, Planning & Zoning and Environmental staff coordinate subdivision and zoning requirements

reflected on the final plat.

Commercial project review is coordinated in a manner similar to the process in the City. A pre-application conference is optional. The developer and/or their consultant may attend a weekly Administrative Review Team (ART) meeting for this purpose. The ARC consists of representatives of the County Building Regulations, Planning & Zoning, Environmental (Stormwater, Wastewater systems) and Highway Departments, along with the Health Department and MODOT. There is no separate procedure for re-development projects.

#### Primary Differences

- \$ In the City, zoning requirements are interpreted by BDS, since they have enforcement authority. County Building Regulations does not have a separate zoning review section, since zoning regulation and enforcement functions are all included in one department (Resource Management).
- \$ Re-development projects are much more common in the City, requiring fire code review and coordination of brownfield, tax credits and other special requirements.
- \$ The City law department is more frequently involved in interpreting development requirements in the City.
- \$ The Fire Department plays an active role in development review in the City. There are separate rural fire districts in the County, which are independent political subdivisions under State law.

### ***3. Staffing, Salaries & Benefits***

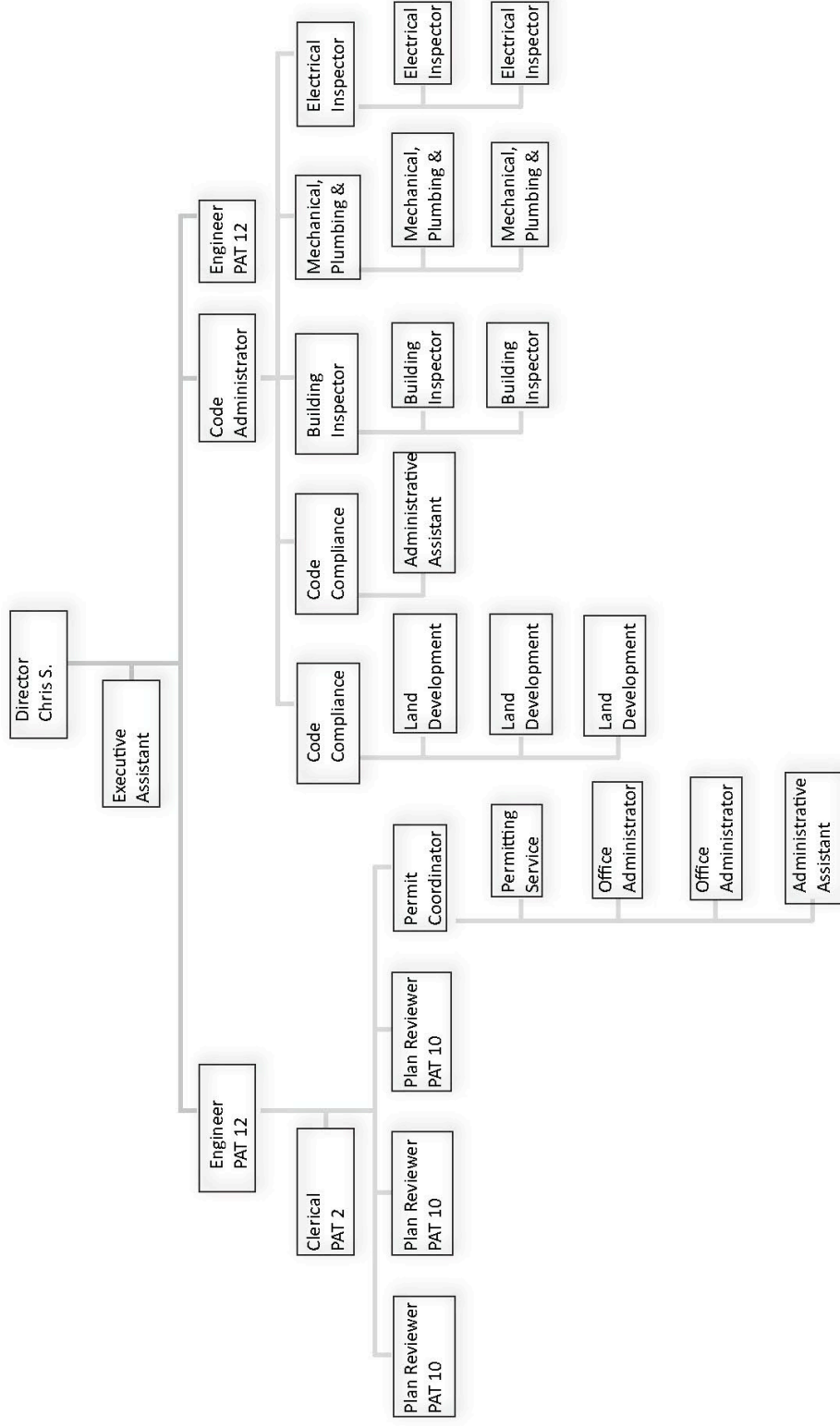
#### City of Springfield

The Building Development Services Department organizational chart is shown below along with a table showing positions and salary ranges. The City BDS department has twenty-nine (29) full time positions, four (4) of which are currently vacant. The City has a formal compensation and payment plan and a comprehensive benefit plan. City employees are “at will” employees; however, terminations must be reviewed and approved by a five-member Personnel Board comprised of community citizens. A comparison of benefits for City and County are summarized in a table and follows organizational charts and salaries table.

#### Greene County

County Building Regulations has nine (9) full time and two (2) shared positions. The Administrator of the Resource Management Department also serves as the Building Regulations Director. There are currently three (3) vacant positions in the County Building Regulations department. The County has a formal compensation and payment plan and a comprehensive benefit plan. County employees are “at will” employees. A progressive discipline process is followed. Comparisons are below.

April 2010



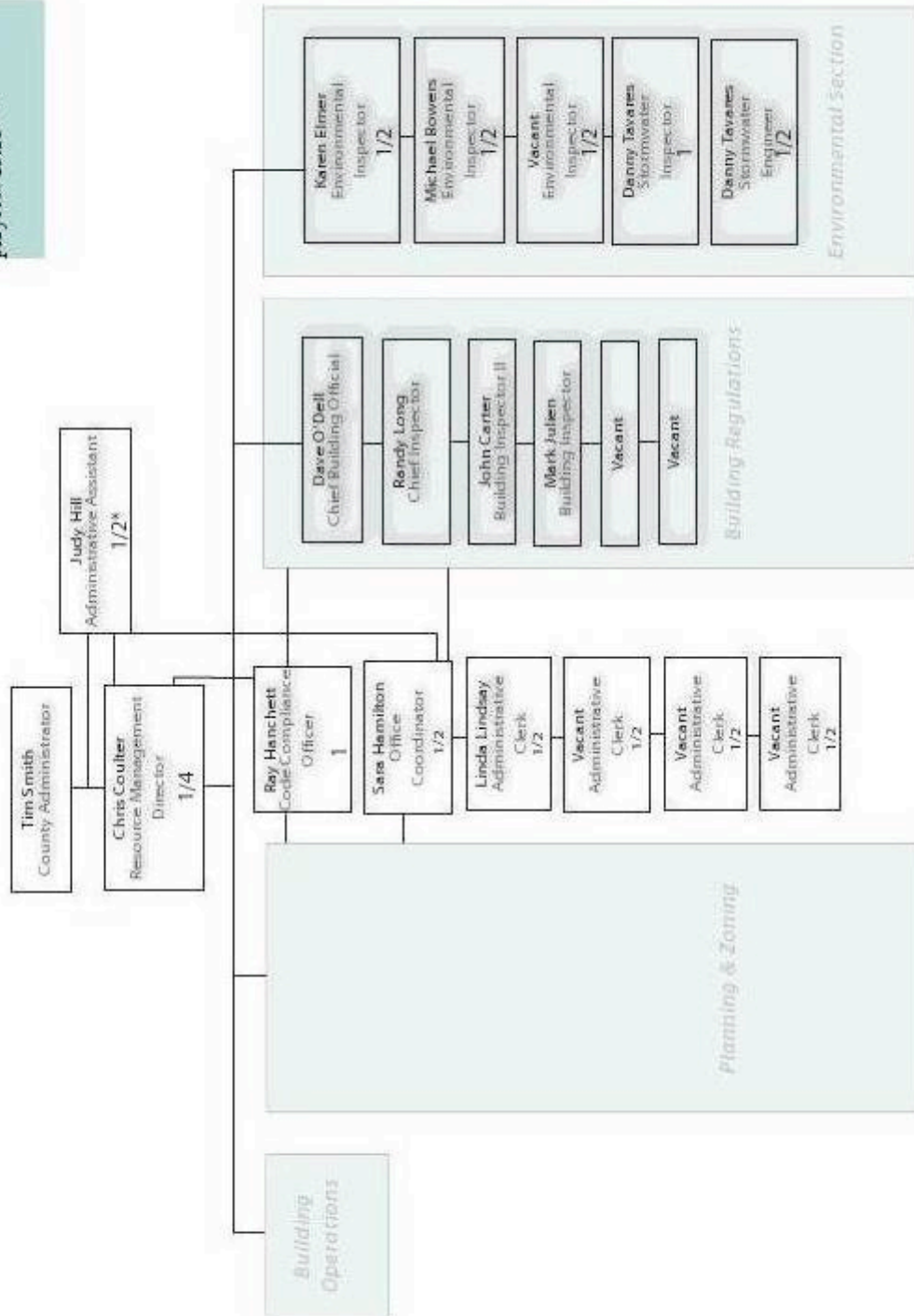
City of Springfield BDS Department Salaries		
Position	Salary Grade	Salary Range
Clerical	PAT 2	\$15,059-21,528
Administrative Assistant	PAT 4	\$19,988-28,371
Office Administrator	PAT 5	\$22,401-31,699
Permitting Service Rep.	PAT 6	\$26,790-36,670
Land Development Investigator	PAT 7	\$32,360-43,993
Building Inspector (Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Gas)	PAT 9	\$37,710-51,313
Plan Reviewer	PAT 10	\$41,308-62,836
Permit Coordinator	PAT 10	\$41,308-62,836
Code Compliance Investigator	PAT 10	\$41,308-62,836
Engineer	PAT 12	\$49,857-67,600
Code Administrator	PAT 12	\$49,857-67,600
Director	DH 14	\$68,307-87,963

Greene County Building Department Salaries		
Position	Salary Grade	Salary Range
Administrative Clerk	5	\$20,550-27,123
Office Coordinator	9	\$27,955-36,941
Administrative Assistant	10	\$30,202-39,894
Building Inspector II	12	\$35,214-46,509
Chief Inspector	13	\$41,059-54,226
Chief Building Official	15	\$44,346-58,573
Director*	22	\$76,024-100,381
*Also serves as Department Director for Planning and Zoning, Environmental Section, and Building Operations		

# **Resource Management Department Organization of Building Services Greene County, Missouri**

April 2010

Total Building Regulations  
Full-time equivalent em-  
ployees: 13.25\*\*



## COMPARISON OF BENEFITS

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>
Medical Insurance	Self insured Provided for employee Family coverage \$394/mo	Humana Provided for employee Family coverage \$688/mo.
Life Insurance	Voluntary contribution	\$15,000 term provided for employee
Dental and other health benefits	Voluntary – cafeteria plan	Voluntary – cafeteria plan
Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plan	Maximum annual contribution: \$16,500 City matches employee contribution	Maximum annual contribution 3% of annual salary, matched by County through the County Employees' Retirement Fund (CERF)
Sick Pay	12 days earned per year. Accrued maximum: 180 days	12 days earned per year Accrued maximum: 60 days
Sick leave redemption	Limited, certain rules apply	Not available
Paid Holidays	9 plus 3 floating holidays	13
Vacation	5 days after 6 months 10 days/yr., 1 - 7 years 15 days/yr., 8-15 years 20 days/yr., 16 or more years	12 days/yr., 1 - 7 years 15 days/yr., 8-14 years 20 days/yr., 15 or more years
Longevity Pay	Varies by years of service	Not available
Retirement	LAGERS (Missouri State system): 2% of average salary, last 3 years	LAGERS (Missouri State system): 1.5% of average salary for last 3 years County Employees Retirement Fund (CERF): mandatory contribution, 4% of salary.
Tuition Reimbursement	With approval from Human Resources Department	Not available

### Primary Differences

\$ There is a significant difference in salaries between the City and County. The following table compares salaries of equivalent positions.

County Position	Salary Range	City Position	Salary Range	Difference at Mid-range County/City
Bldg. Inspection/Plan Review Manager, Grade 15	\$44,346 - \$58,573	Code Administrator, PAT 12*	\$49,858-\$67,600	-12.4%
Building Inspector I, II, III Grade 11, 12, 13	\$32,614-\$50,211	Building Inspector, PAT 9	\$37,710-\$51,313	- 7.0%
Administrative Clerk, Grade 5	\$20,550-\$27,123	Permitting Service Representative, PAT 6	\$26,790-\$36,670	-24.9%
Office Coordinator, Grade 9**	\$27,955-\$36,941	Permit Coordinator, PAT 10	\$41,309-\$55,973	-33.3%

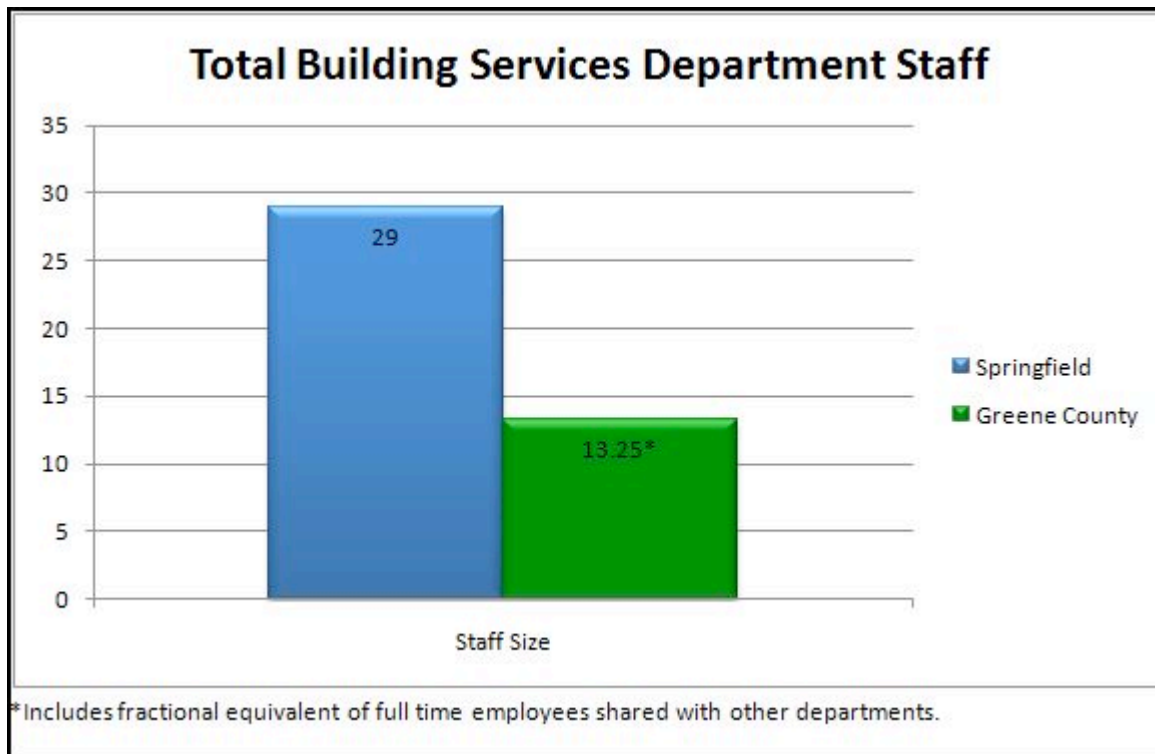
\*Required to be a registered architect or engineer, not required for County position

\*\*Also coordinates Planning & Zoning desk

\$ There is also a significant difference in number of staff. However, direct comparisons of the two building departments should not be made since the City BDS includes floodplain management and zoning enforcement, as well as stormwater and sediment & erosion control review and inspection for building sites. These functions are not performed by the County Building Regulations Department. The following chart shows relative staff size. County staff numbers are adjusted to account for floodplain, zoning and stormwater functions included in other sections of the Resource Management Department. A chart comparing staff sizes is shown below.

\$ The City uses specialized inspectors for plumbing, mechanical, electrical and general building construction. County inspectors are not specialized.

- \$ Planning & Zoning, Floodplain Management (in the Environmental Section) and Building Regulations are all included in the same department in the County (Resource Management), allowing personnel to be more easily shared. County Planning & Zoning and Building Regulations share the same service counter and administrative clerks.
- \$ The City has a more generous benefits package.



\* County total is adjusted to account for building related inspections, plan review and floodplain management functions performed by staff in the Environmental and Planning & Zoning Sections. The County Building Regulations Section by itself has nine (9) full time plus two (2) shared employees.

#### ***4. Permitting and Inspection Activity & Value of Construction***

##### City of Springfield

BDS has nine (9) inspectors devoted to building inspection: three (3) general building inspectors, three (3) mechanical, plumbing and gas inspectors and three (3) electrical inspectors. There is one (1) registered architect who serves as the Code Administrator and one (1) professional engineer is devoted to re-development projects. The plan review and permitting section consists

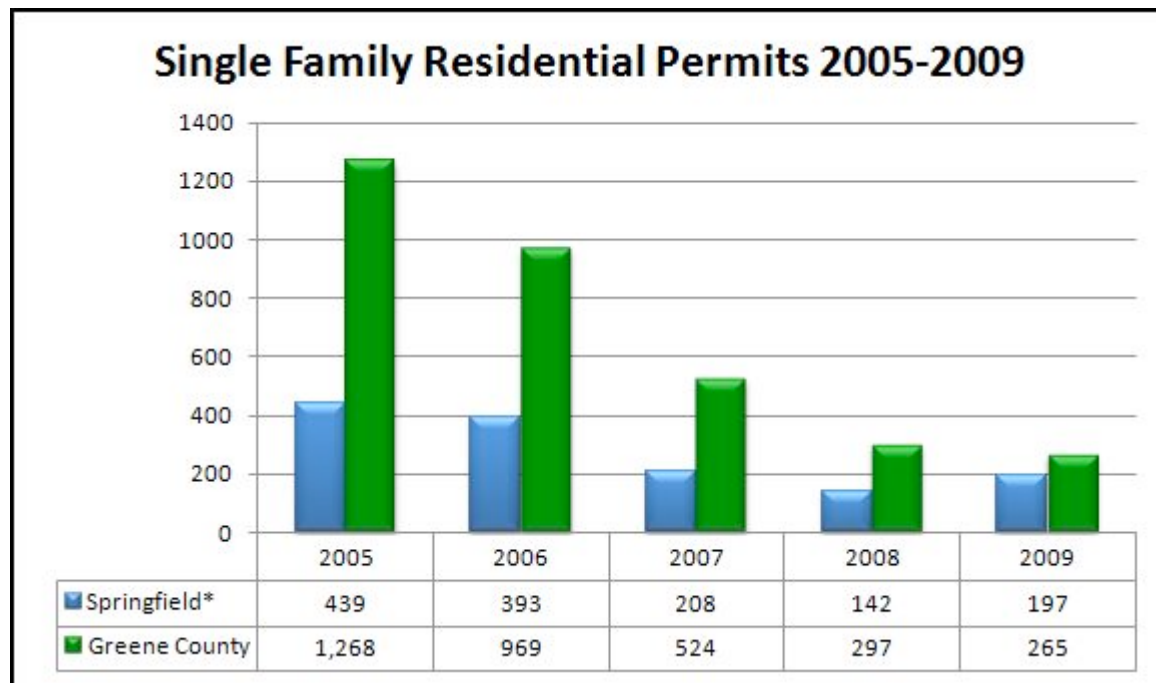


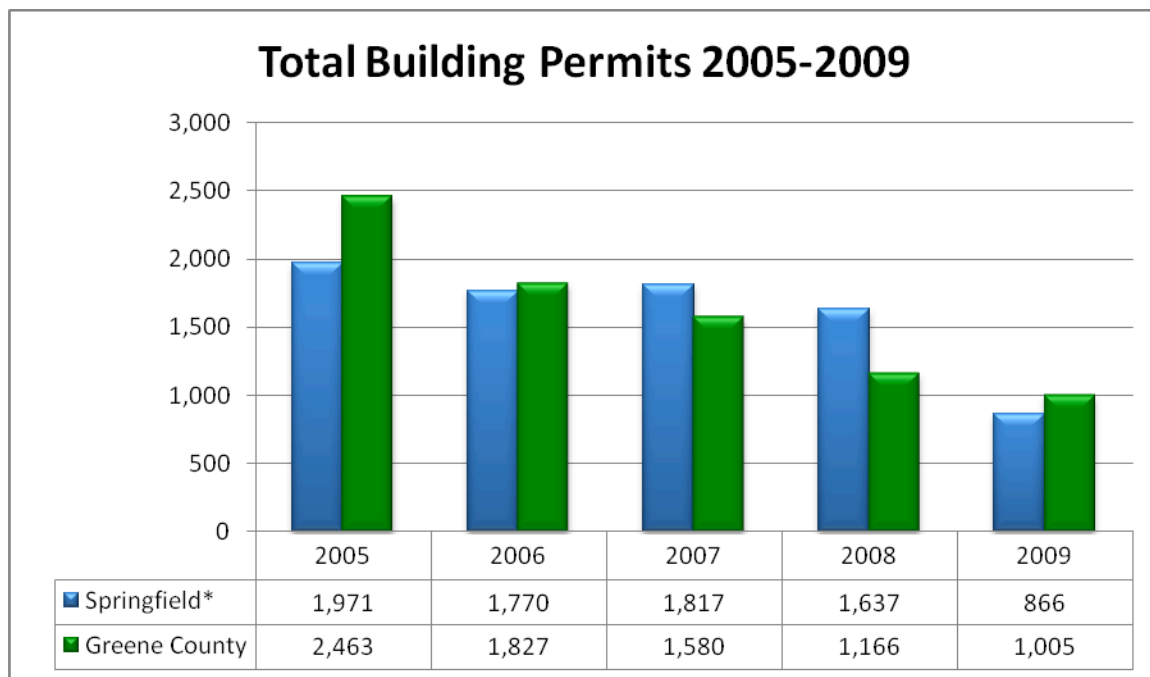
of ten (10) positions under the direction of a professional engineer. In addition, there is a section consisting of six (6) positions devoted to code compliance and land development enforcement.

#### Greene County

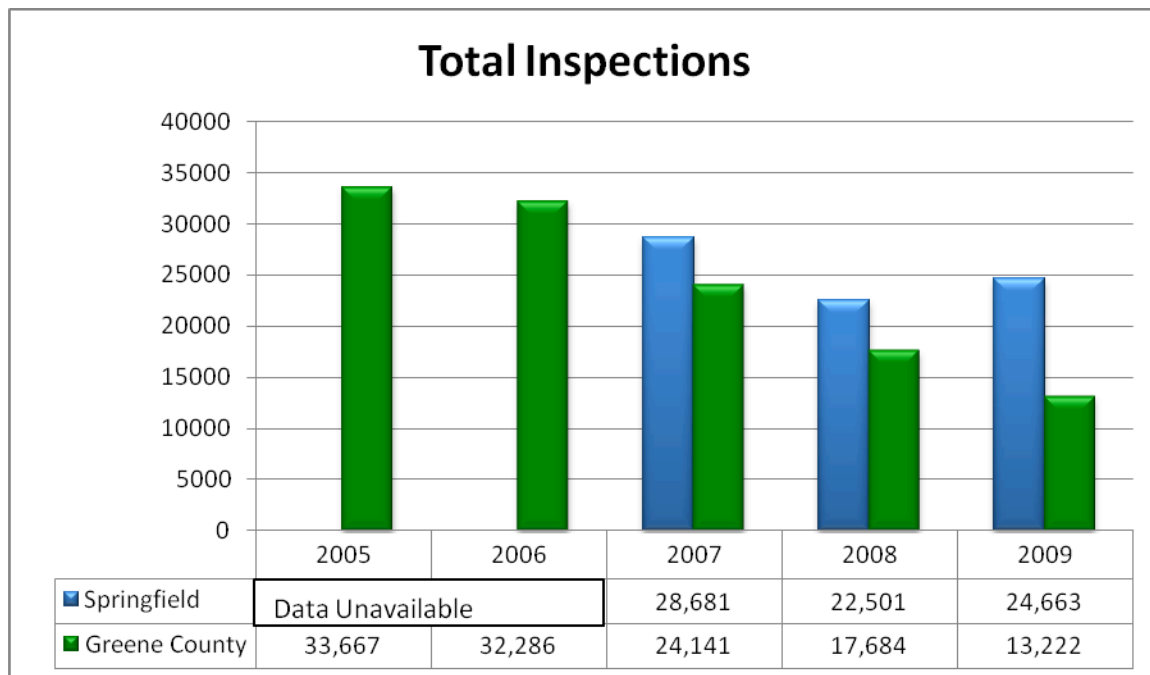
The county has five (5) inspectors devoted to building inspection, one (1) plan reviewer, and three (3) clerical positions. One (1) of the building inspectors is devoted to commercial projects. Sewer connections and septic systems are inspected by the Environmental Section, a separate section in the Resource Management Department.

The following charts compare the number of single family residential permits, total inspections, mileage logged and estimated total value of commercial, residential and total construction for the City and County for the years 2005 through 2009. This period was selected in order to give a more accurate picture of normal activity. Total building activity slowed drastically in 2008 and 2009, whereas 2005 and 2006 were record years for building. Due to a computer system failure, complete data for City BDS was not available for 2005 and 2006.

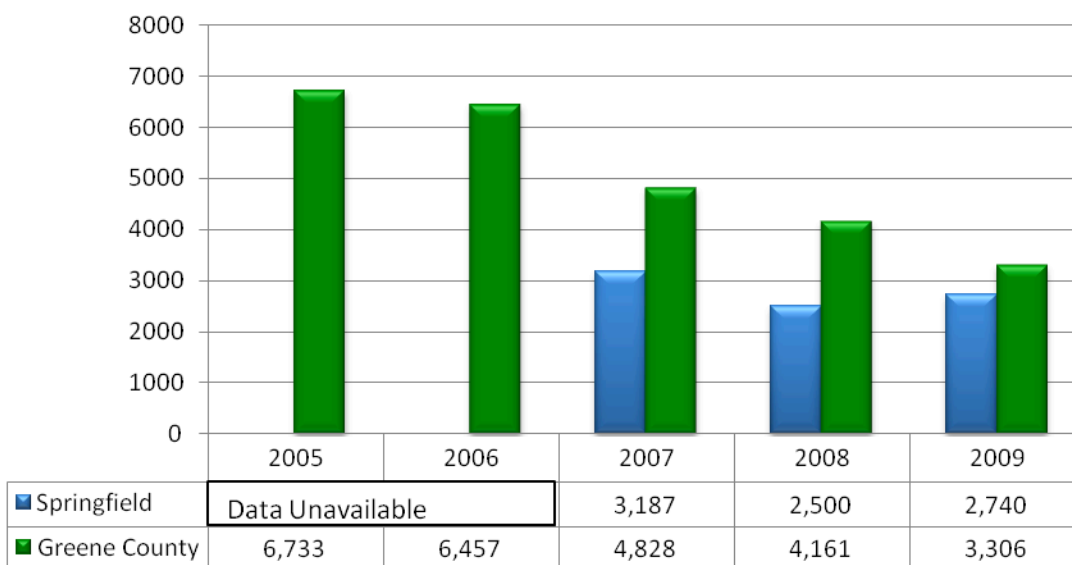




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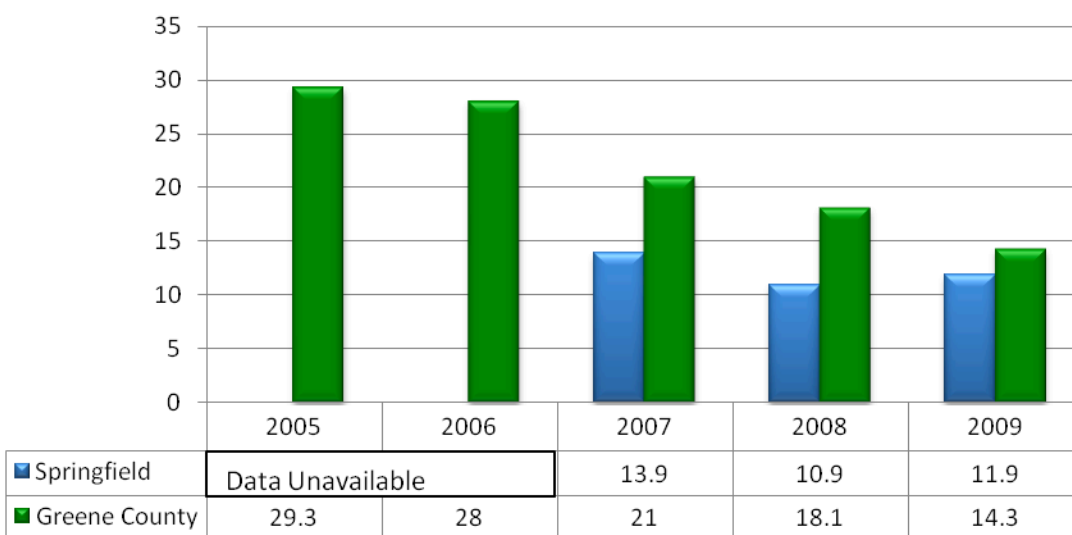


### Average Inspections per Inspector per Year

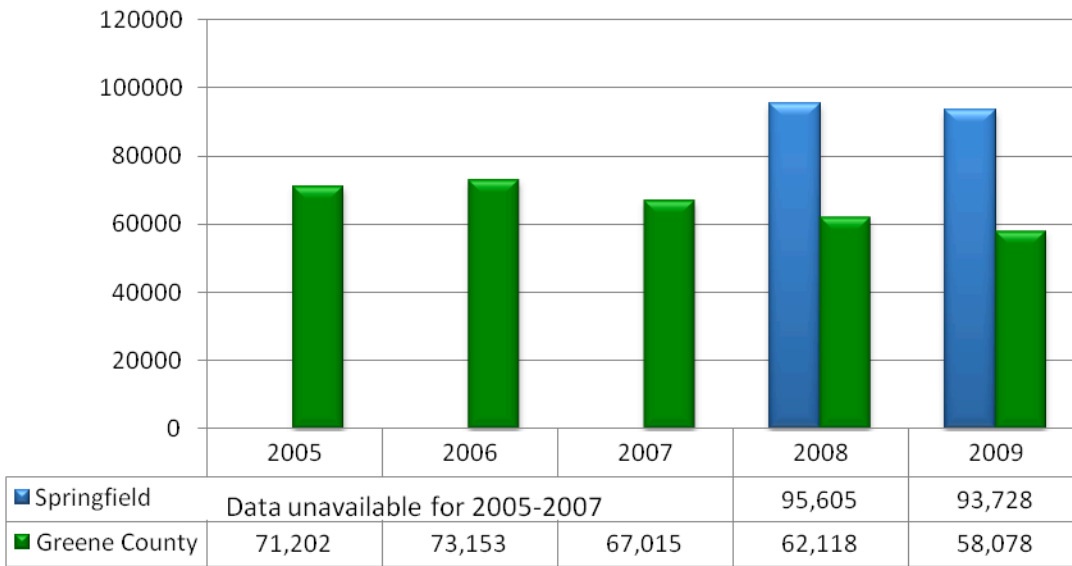


### Average Inspections per Inspector per Day\*

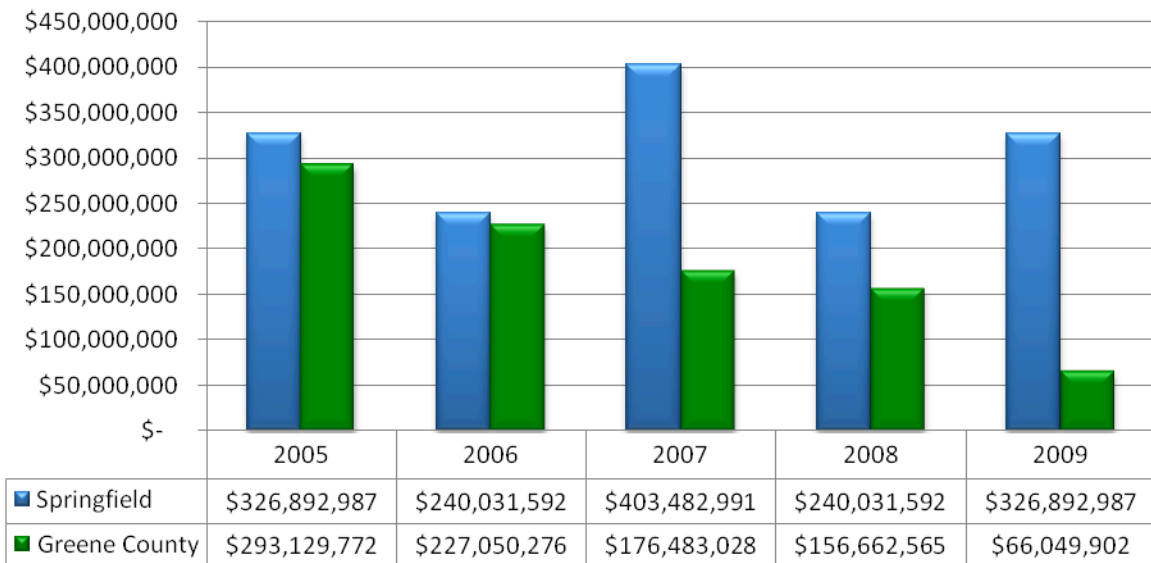
\*based on 230 workdays per inspector per year



### Total Miles Driven By Inspectors



### Valuation of Construction



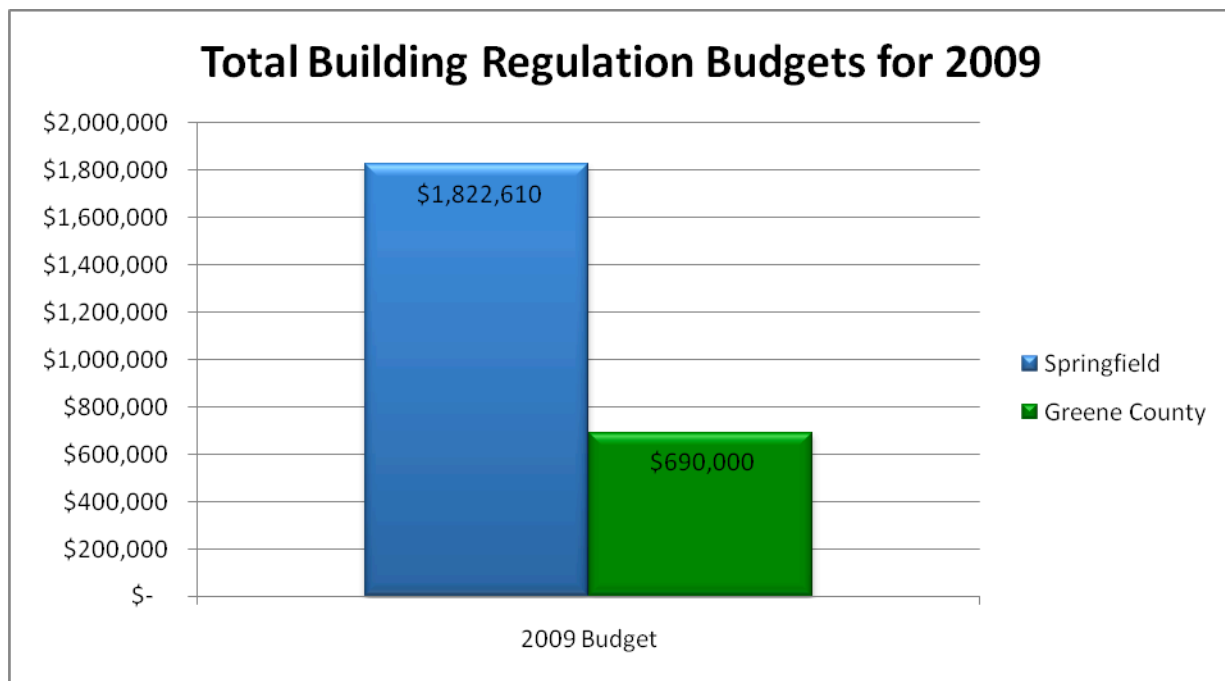
- City of Springfield total for 2007 increased significantly due to St. John's Hospital construction.
- City of Springfield total for 2009 increased significantly due to Cox Medical Center South expansion.

### Primary Differences

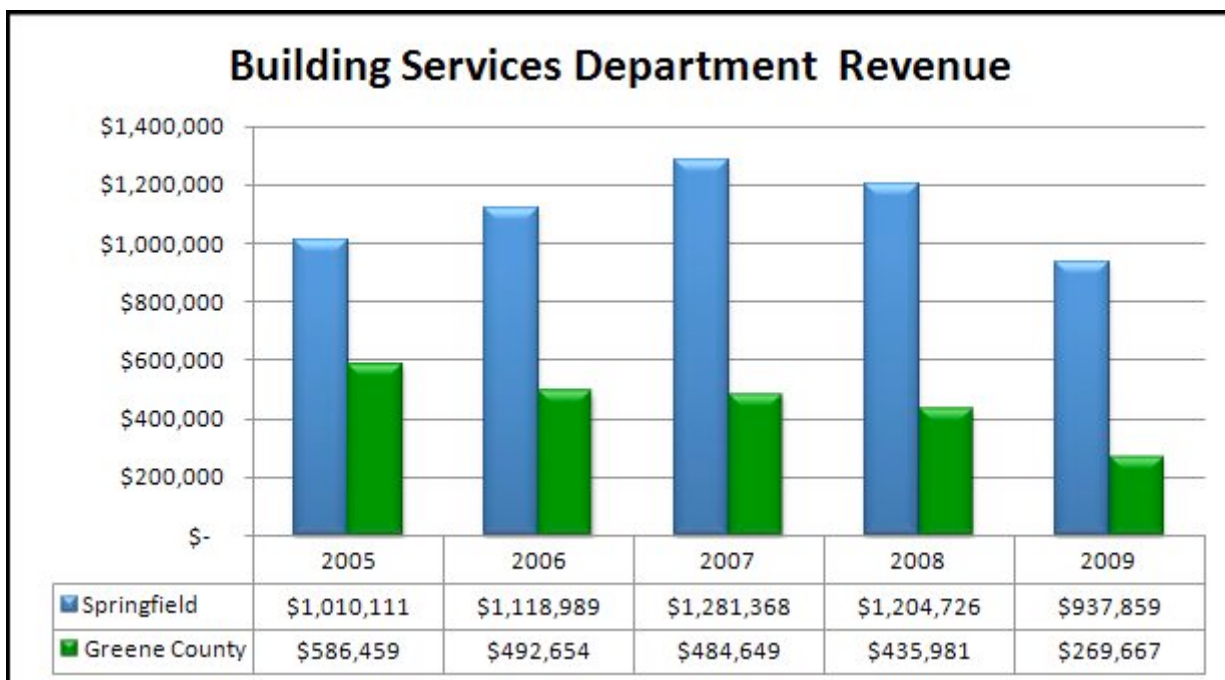
- \$ Most building activity in the City is commercial, while activity in the County is mostly single family residential.
- \$ County inspectors are generalized, while City inspectors are specialized. One inspector in the County can make electrical, mechanical/plumbing/gas and building inspections in one inspection stop; whereas in the City, three different inspectors are required to make these inspections.
- \$ The County has a higher number of inspections per inspector. However, due to the predominance of commercial projects in the City, inspections may be more detailed.
- \$ Mileage driven in the City is higher than that in the County, even though the service area covered is much smaller (82.4 sq. mi. City vs. 678 sq. mi. County). The City's annual vehicle mileage budget is \$64,500 versus \$25,000 budgeted by the County. This difference is most likely due to stops by the individual inspectors with different specialities.
- \$ The City does not provide vehicles. City inspectors use their private vehicles and are paid mileage (currently 50-cents per mile). The County provides County-owned vehicles and does not pay mileage.

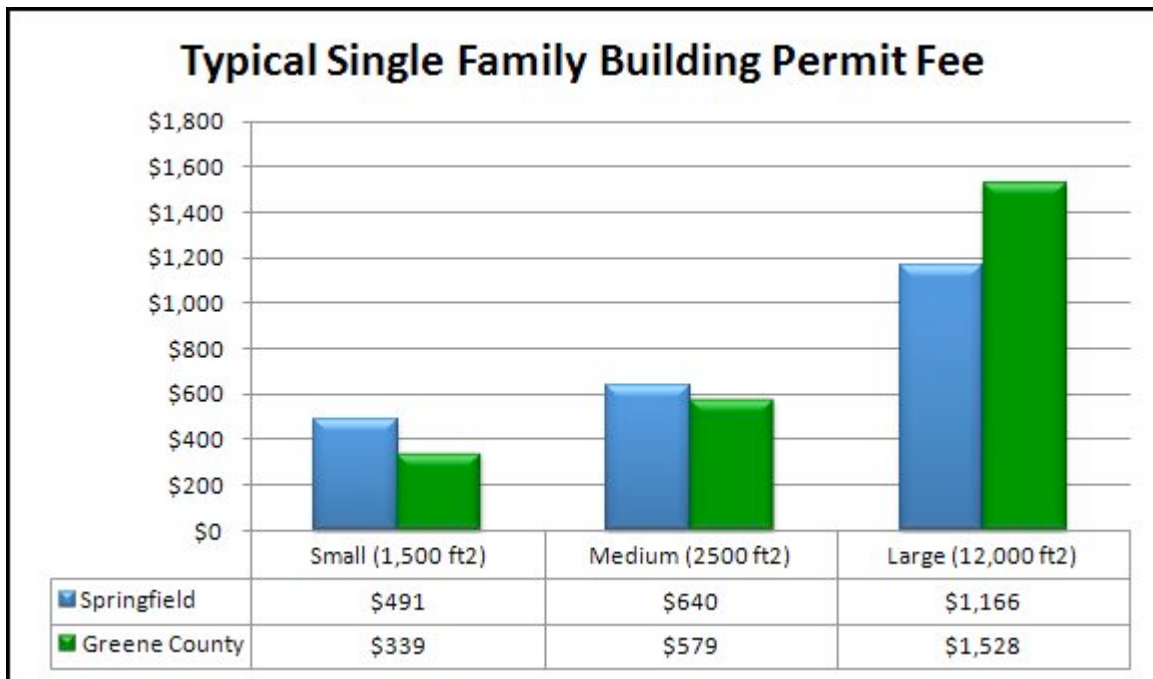
### ***5. Budgets, Fees and Revenue***

The following charts compare current department budgets for the City and County and revenue collected for the years 2005 through 2009. Though the budgets are not affected, it should be noted that the City and County use different fiscal years, with the City's running from July 1 through June 30 and the County on a calendar basis. The City's policy is to collect 100% of the cost of providing service. The County's policy is to collect 75% of the cost of service. (Note: Actual percentage collected depends on amount of building activity. Neither the City nor County automatically adjusts fees to maintain the target.) Direct comparison of fees for commercial construction is difficult; however, in general, the City's fees are higher than the County's. For residential construction, both City and County fees are progressive, increasing with house size. County fees, however, are lower for small houses and significantly higher for large houses.

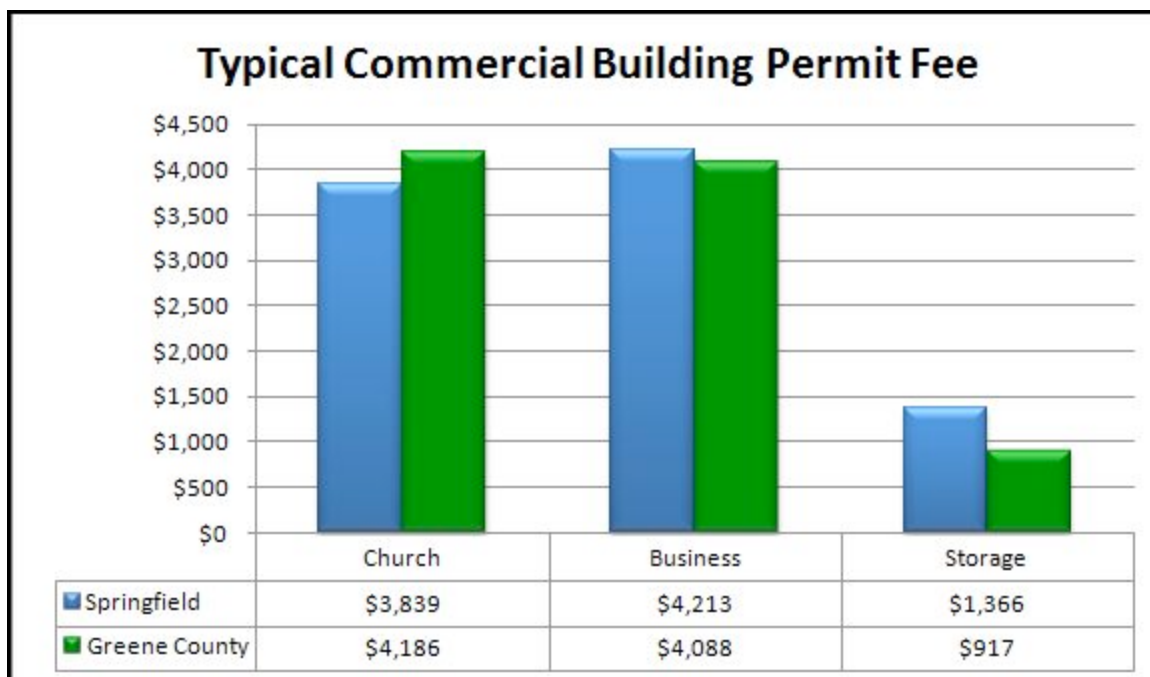


- County Budget includes shared positions in Environmental and Planning & Zoning Sections.
- The County Building Regulations Section budget, by itself, is \$395,300 for 2010.





\* Fees vary based upon size of home and special inspections required. The above example illustrates typical fees for the range of sizes shown.



\*Fees are calculated by formula. City and county formulas differ. The examples shown illustrate typical fees for the types of projects shown.

### **Part III: Summary**

1. The Committee's charge was to determine the practicality of combining City and county development review services and what internal organizational modifications might be needed within either or both organizations regarding this topic to increase service and/or efficiencies.
2. This report is limited to the area of building plan review and inspection.
3. Organizational structures of the two departments are very different. The City's primary building and development service functions are located in separate departments: BDS, Public Works and Planning, whereas the County's building regulation and planning functions are located in one department. The County's structure allows for sharing personnel between various departments whereas the City's generally does not. As a result, certain review functions performed by BDS appear to duplicate those in the Public Works and Planning Departments
4. Enforcement of the zoning ordinance, building regulations and stormwater regulations is delegated solely to the BDS Department in the City. These functions are integrated throughout Building Regulations, Planning & Zoning and Environmental Sections of the County's Resource Management Department, again allowing for sharing of staff resources.
5. The City provides specialized inspectors for electrical, mechanical-plumbing-gas, and building work. This results in separation of inspection functions. For example, a single County inspector makes building, mechanical, plumbing and electrical inspections in one trip, whereas three separate trips by three different inspectors are required in the City. It should be noted that specialized inspection expertise is needed, particularly for complex commercial projects. However, this is generally not needed for residential inspection.
6. The City has a Crafts and Trades ordinance requiring certification of electrical, mechanical and plumbing contractors. The County does not. This is a potentially significant issue if the agencies are combined.
7. The fire code has a much greater impact on design and review requirements in the City. The Springfield Fire Department plays a much more active role in building and development review in the City, than rural fire districts do in the County.
8. The requirement for a residential floor plan has been a long standing political issue for the City, whereas these plans have been required in the County for some time.



9. Salary scales are different. Salaries for City building inspectors are about 7% higher on average than those in the County. Salaries for Permitting Service Representative / Administrative Clerk and Permit Coordinator / Office Coordinator run 25% and 33% higher, respectively, in the City.
10. There are differences in fees and enforcement procedures; however, these are not as challenging to address as the other issues.

#### **Part IV: Conclusions**

Based upon the information gathered, the committee recognizes there are three types of issues that need to be addressed to effectively combine the permitting services of the City and County. The issues are financial, regulatory and cultural.

It appears that long term savings can be realized by combining City and County building and development services. Even if the combined operation were to be placed on the City wage scale, the increase in cost can most likely be offset by reductions in total personnel. It should be noted that because development activity is currently very slow, the amount of staff needed at this particular time will not reflect the amount of staff needed historically, or likely to be needed in the future when the economy improves.

The committee's interview with Kevin Gipson, Director of the City-County Health Department, revealed that there are very few issues encountered with administration of differing City and County regulations or the differing enforcement procedures. The primary improvements which stood out in the evolution of the combined Health Department were first, the placement of all employees on the same wage scale and second, allowing staff to be assigned to City or County functions as needed. The ability to share personnel across department lines is key to a more efficient operation. If one jurisdiction is experiencing less development activity, staff can be shifted to activities in the other jurisdiction.

While the two jurisdictions are working under the same building code, there are significant differences in the two zoning ordinances. Any important difference in the City zoning ordinance is the Administrative Review Committee (ARC). The ARC has certain review, appeal and approval responsibilities assigned in the zoning ordinance. The intent of the ARC is to streamline the process by maximizing the ability to deal with development review and approval administratively. However, the ARC also diffuses authority and creates some uncertainty within the process because a decision by the ARC must be unanimous. One department director, of the three, essentially holds veto power over the other two. And, there is reluctance for directors to question issues that arise in another director's department. Each director is the expert and is ultimately responsible for the outcome in their respective department, so the other directors tend to defer. Each director tends to have different priorities ranging from: constructing public improvements to maximizing development opportunities to ensuring conformance to codes.

These priorities may overlap but are not always congruent. There is no structure like the ARC in the County. If a significant issue in the County requiring advanced interpretation emerges on a project being reviewed, the issue rises up the chain of command, ultimately to the Director of the Resource Management Department or the County Administrator, who has authority to make administrative decisions. It would be difficult for the City to function this way because of how the zoning ordinance currently assigns responsibilities, but another problem is how the City organization is structured. There is no one position with overall responsibility for the development review process except the City Manager. Due to the size of the City organization and the complexity of development issues, past and the present city managers have tended to not get involved in development issues until they became extraordinary issues.

Another cultural difference between the City and County is that City staff is inclined to make a much more literal interpretation of City regulations and ordinances. This is due in part to the size of the organization and the desire to ensure consistency in application of the requirements. It has also been the result of the management philosophies of department directors and key staff. . There is also significantly more reliance on the City Law Department to interpret regulations and requirements. The City has been working on this issue by bringing forward a number of zoning ordinance amendments to provide more administrative flexibility and to clarify language that is confusing. There have also been staffing changes to address philosophical issues.

The City has placed all enforcement functions within the Building Development Services Department. This has developed into a system where the BDS department is almost regarded as a quasi-independent entity, relying upon its independent interpretation of zoning ordinances as a part of building plan review. This creates conflicts and appears to duplicate certain functions of the Planning & Development Department. This is particularly true for Planned Development ordinances, which are written by Planning Department staff, then interpreted by BDS staff. BDS interpretation may not reflect the intent of the ordinance as written and approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. There does not appear to be an effective way for these differences in interpretation to be resolved at the department level. Hence, the Law Department is frequently consulted. The result of this practice is that resolution of fairly minor differences in interpretation can take considerable effort to resolve. This is a primary source of dissatisfaction with the development community. Again, the City has been working on this issue. The Planning and Development Department has been involving Building Development Service in the drafting of Planned Developments and Conditional Overlay Districts, which are being used more frequently in lieu of Planned Development to address specific development proposals. BDS consults more frequently with the Planning and Development Department on interpretation issues, and there is less involvement of the Law Department.

It is clear that while reorganization can occur within the City or through this City-County combination and the City's zoning ordinance can be amended to try to address the issues discussed in the preceding paragraphs, the issues can really only be successfully addressed by the City Manager explicitly stating the City's development philosophy and demand conformance by all departments. If this cultural issue is not addressed, combined permitting service will probably have many of the same issues the City organization currently experiences. The City Manager

has a unique opportunity because two of the director positions (Public Works and Building Development Services) are currently vacant. As part of the hiring process, the City Manager can make his philosophy known to prospective candidates.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the expectations of the development community. There is the expectation of some sort of change to address these issues. Some may believe a structural change such as the combination of the City and County services is necessary, but as outlined above it is not sufficient.

The critical importance addressing the cultural issue must be clearly explained to the development community. It has been helpful to have a representative of the development community participate in the committee's discussions about this issue. It is hoped that the development community will appreciate the importance of this issue if it is explained by one of their peers. The bottom line is that any changes in organization must be clearly articulated, monitored and reported back after a period of time.

Finally, the committee is also concerned about the on-going morale of the City and County permitting and inspection staffs. Both staffs are aware of the committee's work. There are staff concerns about changes that may be coming, particularly the possibility of a combination of staffs that could result in layoffs. The process needs to move along quickly upon receipt of this report with a strategy developed to alleviate employees concerns. The danger of on-going uncertainty is that some of the best staff will leave for other jobs because they have the best ability to be hired elsewhere in this difficult economy.

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# MEMORANDUM

May 20, 2011

**TO:** Members of the Citizen's Law Enforcement Merger Study Group

A copy of the report titled "Merger of Springfield Police Department and Greene County Sheriff Department, Turf-Purchasing-Training" dated 2010 was received by the City and County staff in January 2011. The City Manager, Police Chief, Sheriff, County Administrator, a representative of the County Commission and key city and county staff have carefully reviewed the report and provide the following comments.

First, allow us to express our appreciation for the considerable amount of volunteer time and effort expended in compiling information and preparing the report. We are impressed with the expertise and breadth of experience of the committee members. The commitment to the community shown in generously sharing your time and talent is indeed gratifying.

We understand and acknowledge that you are not advocating a full merger of the two departments at this time, but that the discussion and research of this possibility remain a long-term goal. We agree with your conclusion that, particularly in these difficult economic times, we owe it to our citizens to eliminate any unnecessary duplications of effort. We also agree with your statement that "turf issues should not be acceptable in making policy." We believe that this applies not only to law enforcement operations, but to all city and county functions.

We recognize and agree with your recommendation that the two departments seek and take advantage of every opportunity to reduce costs through cooperative purchasing and contracting and combined training. We will aggressively pursue these goals and will seek every practical opportunity to reduce cost and increase efficiency in this manner.

You observed that, while the Springfield Police Department (SPD) and Greene County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) have worked closely together in many areas, there have, none-the-less, remained significant barriers between the departments. We are very pleased to report that as a result of the close working relationship between Sheriff Arnott and Chief Williams, the philosophies of the two agencies have been brought into much closer alignment. The Police Department and Sheriff's Office have been, and will continue, working together on a number of initiatives that have a significant impact on efficiency and costs for providing law enforcement services to our citizens.

Examples of these include:

- **Dispatch:** We continue to utilize a county-wide dispatching system and the new 911/emergency management center under construction will enhance those efforts.

- ***Records Management System Consolidation:*** SPD has installed a new records management system (Niche) and has offered the option for the Greene County Sheriff's Office, as well as other area police departments, to "piggyback" on the system to increase information sharing and accessibility as well as create significant cost savings. GCSO and Republic PD are in the planning stages of taking advantage of this cooperative opportunity.
- ***Firing Range:*** A recently completed and approved Memorandum of Understanding between GCSO and the City of Springfield granted access to a portion of the current firing range for the Sheriff and his employees.
- ***DWI Enforcement:*** SPD, GCSO, and the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP), are in regular contact and are now coordinating their efforts as they relate to checkpoints and saturation patrols focused on DWI offenses.
- ***Training:*** The upcoming construction of the Springfield Regional Police and Fire Training Center will increase and enhance the opportunities for coordinated and combined training between GCSO and SPD, as well as all other local law enforcement agencies. This facility has been designed from the ground up to be a regional asset.
- ***Intelligence:*** The SPD Crime Analysis Unit prepares a "Law Enforcement Sensitive" daily bulletin and currently distributes it to GCSO and over twenty other agencies in the interest of intelligence sharing and enhancing officer safety. Input from the partner agencies is encouraged and we are hopeful it will increase.
- ***Jail:*** Funded by a county-wide tax, the GCSO operates the jail for use by both SPD and GCSO. The agreement in place since its construction has allowed the City of Springfield to eliminate the operation of a City Jail, creating a more efficient operation and save taxpayers' money. We recognize that Springfield citizens pay county taxes, too.
- ***Property Crimes:*** Sheriff Arnott and Chief Williams spearheaded a public education campaign highlighting the increased occurrence of property crime throughout the area. In conjunction with this effort, SPD, GCSO and MSHP created a property crime task force focusing on auto theft, heavy equipment theft and cargo theft affecting the area.
- ***Crime Lab:*** The City of Springfield and the State of Missouri collaborated on the construction of a regional crime lab in Springfield. The new lab, operated by the MSHP, has been a great benefit to both the GCSO and SPD by saving time, money and personnel costs.
- ***SRT/SWAT:*** Each agency operates a specialty unit that provides some level of tactical response. We are planning to discuss and plan a move to a more regional focus.

We agree that as fuel costs continue to rise, we will need to seriously consider alternative fuels and vehicles. Staff at the City of Springfield Department of Public Works and the Greene County Highway Department is constantly researching the latest advances in technology and equipment and will continue to do so. As new vehicles are ordered, we will continue to utilize state contracts or local bid processes to ensure the most cost-effective use of taxpayer funds. Options for alternative fuels (i.e. E-85, CNG, hybrid, etc), and type, make and model of vehicles needed will be reviewed on an annual basis by all agencies.

The recommendations of your committee are consistent with those of the Safety & Justice Roundtable and the Public Safety chapter of the new Community Strategic Plan. It is our intention to continue to work toward achieving these goals. We recognize that the citizens of Springfield and Greene County expect and deserve high-quality and consistent public safety services regardless of whether they live within the city limits of Springfield or in the county. We will continue to do our utmost to provide the best services in the most cost-effective manner possible.

Again, thank you for both your interest in public safety and the time and effort you invested in your report.

Sincerely yours,

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Greg Burris, City Manager

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Jim Arnott, Sheriff

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Paul Williams, Chief of Police

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Tim Smith, County Administrator

cc: Mayor O'Neal  
Members of the Springfield City Council  
Greene County Commission  
Tom Mountjoy, Presiding Judge, 31<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit  
Robert Spence and Jean Twitty, Co-Chairs, Safety & Justice Roundtable

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***CITIZENS LAW ENFORCEMENT  
MERGER STUDY GROUP***

***Merger of Springfield Police Department  
And Greene County Sheriff department***

***Turf - Purchasing -Training***

***2010***

**Contact:  
Donna R. Bergen**

**417.868.8280**

## **Introduction:**

The Citizens Law Enforcement Merge Study Group was formed by citizens of Greene County following the Safety and Justice Roundtable's final report. The Roundtable committee was appointed by the city and county to study issues regarding law enforcement, the courts, juvenile justice and other areas of justice and safety in Springfield and Greene county.

The Roundtable chose not to study a merger of the Springfield Police Department with the Greene County Sheriff's Department. In their final report it was stated, "that both entities more fully examine opportunities for shared resources, and incremental consolidation." They also suggested that the study of merging city and county law enforcement, "in part or totally be the mission of the agencies themselves."

In an editorial piece in the Springfield-News Leader the suggestion was made that if there were individuals in the city and county who were interested in the Roundtable's recommendation on merging the city police and the county sheriff's department the paper would host an initial meeting place for that discussion. The response was sufficient and a meeting room was provided.

Following that meeting, some in attendance agreed they wanted to know more about mergers in general and mergers of law enforcement specifically. It was decided to schedule a follow up meeting at one of the libraries. At that meeting an agenda was set and it was agreed that all future meeting would be held at libraries in Springfield. All meetings were open to the public.

The majority of those who formed the Citizens Law Enforcement Merge Study Group have had long careers in criminal justice that include Federal Marshal Service, federal and state wardens and superintendents, a retired deputy director of corrections, chiefs of police and law enforcement personnel. A local attorney with an impressive interactive history with law enforcement and a local county resident, whose family has lived in this area since 1868, completed this study group.

As an ad-hoc committee we believe, for a variety of reasons, that more attention should be focused on a merger of the two largest law enforcing departments in Greene County. We recognize that both the city and county, the sheriff and chief of police have shared resources and programs when possible, but this practice has been limited and sporadic.

We disagree with the Roundtable's recommendation that the Springfield Police Department and the Greene County Sheriff's department should be expected to bear the burden of producing a report on merging parts or all of their departments and find it highly unlikely that either has the time or man power, or should be expected to use already tightly budgeted funds to accomplish such a task.

Our initial goal was the study of a full merger of these two departments, and this remains our long term goal. However, after further discussion it was decided instead to study training, purchasing of more efficient vehicles, vehicle maintenance and turf issues at this time.



Included in our research were interviews, internet searches and telephone contacts with law enforcement personnel both in and out of the state, published material on the subject, contact with a researcher on mergers, and casual conversations with current and retired law enforcement employees.

We hosted a group discussion on a merge of these departments that included: Springfield City Manager Greg Burris, Greene County Presiding Commissioner, David Coonrod; and County Administrator Tim Smith, Judge J. Dan Conklin, Dr. Ken Herfkens, attorney Jim Housley and Acting Police Chief Ron Hartman. On an individual basis we invited Sheriff Arnott, retired sheriffs Jack Meritt, John Pierpoint and Chief Rowe to meet with us. Sheriff Arnott accepted our invitation but the others declined. Chief of Police Paul Williams was visited following his appointment, in his office.

Retired Springfield Major Steve Ijames addressed our group as to what we might want to focus on in the areas chosen to study. Mr. Ijames who served on the Roundtable introduced the idea of a merger to that committee. Attorney Darrel Moore met with us and discussed the needs of law enforcement, the courts, and the problems of youth crime. On an individual basis we met with Mr. Collin Quigley, Assistant City manager and the County Commission. Since meetings were open to the public others, including law enforcement officers, attended some of our meetings.

We consider the following not a finite discovery process, but rather a new beginning in discovery of the benefits of implementing a merger of the city police and county sheriff departments. We offer the following in hope that it will encourage further study on a complete merger that will include a modern metropolitan law enforcement training academy.

### **TURF:**

What is "turf-ism"? One definition is, "non-cooperation or conflict between organizations with seemingly common goals or interest." The perception of the degree of power surrendered or gained by one or the other organizations involved is the basic factor in triggering a turf issues. The city and county boundaries distinguish what belongs to the city and what belongs to the county. Boundaries are about power. They are created for various reasons, but always about what is ours and what is yours. Boundaries can promote strife or the pursuit for positive change.

As Springfield and unincorporated Greene County continue to grow, the need for more or expansions of human services, schools, road ways and law enforcement drain budgets. The current budgets for law enforcement are insufficient to keep up with this growing population and the increases of crime. Communities across the nation are being forced to make budget cuts as is Springfield and Greene County, hoping that the damage is not too severe. Law enforcement agencies are not being spared this regressive mandate. Pressure on these departments unfortunately foster the notion of "what is ours." Protecting scarce resources is unfortunate, but happens even at the expense of other program that are also necessary. When economic boundaries are drawn what is ours becomes more important than what is theirs.

Boundaries separate the city and county legally, but are becoming superficial as growth continues. Rigid boundaries are fodder for turf-ism. When it comes to managing government,

especially in difficult economic times, residents of both feel the pain as departments and programs are required to reduce their budgets, with the unrealistic expectation that services will not be significantly harmed.

Crime naturally follows population growth, putting more pressure on law enforcement personnel and budgets. Our police and sheriff's department strive to serve their jurisdictions to the best of their ability with the resources available to them. Needless to say, this is not even close to being optimal conditions for the management of crime. Communities similar to ours are choosing to be practical and innovative and are embracing new options, including mergers of their law enforcement departments to mitigate the losses in revenue.

The conversation regarding a merger of the Springfield Police Department with the Greene County Sheriff's department springs up now and then, but ultimately remains at the bottom of the list of justice concerns. The question is why? These departments are more similar than different. They both have budgets, facilities to maintain, training and purchasing departments. Citizens of the city and county have the same expectations of their respective departments. When it comes to criminal behavior, not jurisdictions, what can one do that the other can not do? Having two major law enforcement departments in Greene County is difficult to defend especially in times of economic stress.

Do we have a turf problem? You would think not, considering the previous successfully merged departments of the city and county, such as the library systems, health departments, 911, new crime lab and even a new Emergency Management Center that is in the process of construction. The older mergers have proven to be very successful and well worth the effort and money it took to produce a better and more efficient product. It is obvious the decision makers and the public realized that all of these mergers were for the greater good. It also would seem obvious that they found economic justification, as well as other benefits, to have supported these mergers. Some folks now wonder why they took so long and can't imagine going back to the "old way." So what is preventing the decision to study and possible merge the Springfield Police Department and the County Sheriff Department?

Governor Nixon recently merged the State Water Patrol with the State Highway Patrol and clearly stated he did so for economic reasons. Turf did not get in the way of the Governor's decision, but concern regarding the state budget and preventing potential lay offs of personnel obviously influenced this decision.

Included in the attachments is a letter to previous mayor Tom Carlson dated 1989, twenty one years ago, from a resident of Springfield, regarding a merger of the city's police with the county sheriff department, noting that such a merger would save tax payers dollars. He reminded the mayor a merger had, "halfheartedly been talked about for years" and "has been successful in other parts of our state and country." His concerns were based on economic condition as well as efficiency and fairness. Unfortunately this citizen's letter was shelved and almost forgotten. The objective of this citizens group is to encourage a comprehensive study on a merger of these departments and bring it to the attention of the public and encourage their participation.

Crime is a relentless topic of conversation and the increase in crime is a budget buster. Communities across the country are recognizing they have to do something different considering that new taxes and grants are difficult to come by. As criminal behaviors becomes more sophisticated so must law enforcement. Immediate benefits and long term savings, as a result of mergers, have prompted pro-active communities to choose this option as a major part of addressing their budget difficulties.

Philosophy is another subject that comes to the surface when mergers are considered. Chief Rowe was quoted in the Springfield News-Leader, that the philosophies of the two departments were "significantly different" and "would be a major reason not to merge." He did not however identify in what ways they were different. An extensive search of police and sheriff departments philosophies, including ours, and information gathered from departments we contacted, did not show any important differences, much less significant ones. All focused on protecting the community. The rhetoric may be longer or shorter, but the operative statement in all philosophies reviewed was to protect people and property. One could legitimately question the effectiveness of one law enforcement department working under a philosophy that was significantly different than other departments.

In all merges the issue of "political will" plays a major role in a successful merger or a failed attempt. If the political will is contaminated by turf issues, a civil discussion on mergers is very difficult. While turf issues can be a distraction to contend with, the reality of decreasing budgets, dealing with rapid population growth and increases in criminal behavior, along with significant changes in police strategies and improved technology, should carry enough weight to overcome merger disputes. Sometimes it does, but some times turf wins. It all depends on the willingness of government and the departments involved to put aside their special interest, for the good of the larger community.

Facing economic realities themselves, citizens have a better understanding of the importance of efficiency in government. With an opportunity to be more involved, citizens can better understand the issues, intelligently participate in the discussion and make informed decisions. More and more communities are supporting mergers of their law enforcement agencies and "political will" is turning in favor of this option.

It appeared that some individuals who attended our Saturday group meeting support delaying this conversation, "for now" and, "forever." They saw no reason to bring this subject back to the political table or to the attention of the public. This seemed to be based on having once tried and failed on other law enforcement issues. Failed attempts should encourage, not discourage, policy makers to look carefully at what could have been done better in presenting their case to the public and making changes that would gain public support. It does not seem reasonable to put any issue on a shelf and forget it, if that issue is based on improving a situation that is in stress and will only fester if left unattended. Could there have been a turf problem at that time? Continuing to ignore or push this proposal off for another 21 years may be tempting. We suggest doing so is short sighted, and delays the inevitable.

We learned a great deal from this meeting as we have from contacts with law enforcement officials and staff from various parts of the country as well as researchers and authors of law

enforcement/criminal justice literature. All of these people took time to share their knowledge and experience with us. Apparently these individuals believe in mergers and were willing to help us as much as possible. The good news conveyed was that turf issues, when expected and dealt with up-front in a non-combative manner, can be resolved and are soon forgotten. One higher ranking officer stated, "we just have a bigger family now." While sometime regrets were expressed by the public and even officers, more often were told the merge made things "better".

Cost is certainly a major issue. Which group has more to contribute causes concerns. However, when fully understood, no one loses by merging these departments. Crime is better controlled, efficiency increases, and training and benefits are equalized, both essential for a stable and committed force.

Studies clearly found, and failed merger attempts demonstrated with few exceptions, turf issues can be one of the most contentious issues in the discussion of mergers, in spite of solid evidence that mergers work. When fear dominates the discussion, citizens are concerned that they will lose what is incorrectly perceived only as theirs. When a crime is committed it likely will have an effect on other than just the area where it occurred. The importance of educating the public cannot be understated. It can be an uphill battle to gain support from the public if their local politicians and other community leaders are more interested in their turf than in educating the public. However, in a few cases citizens have put turf on a shelf and moved forward in spite of the lack of political support and putting community safety first.

Turf issues should not be acceptable in making policy. To bring the merger discussion back to the political table and to the attention of the public now is appropriate. It is inevitable that a metropolitan department of law enforcement will happen. Even if the "political will" is lacking to commission a study on merging our two largest law enforcement agencies in Greene County, that can and should change. Postponing only complicates the process, and delays short term benefits and long term savings. Economy of assets will demand that change.

When the city and the county take action on moving the study of a law enforcement merger forward, they will be sending a message to the public that even in weak economic times they are preparing to do what is in the best interest of this larger community. Just recently a Public Safety Center, costing the city and county \$16.7 million with an additional three million from our federal government to coordinate more than "70 federal, state, and local response agencies during a disaster" is breaking ground. The same level of support is worthy of this project. Crime is a *disaster* that happens every day and night in our communities.

### **Purchasing & Leasing:**

Regardless of the economy, purchasing or leasing equipment or services are major budget expenditures. Whether the economy is good or bad law enforcement equipment and supplies must be provided. Considering the volume and variety of items purchased, for this study, we selected to focus on purchasing or leasing vehicles and their maintenance. Fuel cost is also considered.

As of April 2010 Greene County began using the Springfield's purchasing contracts for fuels.

According to the county purchasing department this was a wise decision, saving the county money. The agreement is not binding, allowing the county to purchase through either department's contracts, choosing the one that offers the best price.

If the city and county merged the police and sheriff departments and integrated their fleet with fuel efficient vehicles cost savings would be significant. The current fleet of high fuel consumption squad cars presently in use by both the city and county, Ford's Crown Victoria and the Dodge Charger, average between twelve and sixteen miles per gallon. If mileage per gallon were doubled, which is the case with alternative vehicles, the savings could be very impressive and could lead to approximately a quarter million dollars saved annually.

Government pressure to reduce fuel consumption and toxic emissions most likely will continue, while cost of fuels will continue to rise. Should the cost of fuels double, budgets will be even more challenged. Should, for whatever reason, the cost of fuels increase to the point of having to reduce purchases, the results could be fewer patrol vehicles on the streets. To prepare for such an event, now is the time to integrate alternative vehicles, fuels, and maintenance options.

The objections we hear from law enforcement regarding alternative vehicles and "greener" fuels, include the following:

- \* four cylinder cars are too small and unsafe for officers
- \* front wheel drive vehicles are too dangerous to operate and subject to rollovers
- \* smaller cars are useless in pit maneuvers
- \* the more fuel efficient vehicles do not have enough trunk space
- \* alternative vehicles are not useful when transporting prisoners for work crews, and courts.
- \* these vehicles can not perform in high-speed chases.

All of these concerns must be addressed. We suggest that most, if not all, can be managed through training and interior modifications, as is done for squad cars now. Some think that the culprit is "they don't look like police cars."

By assigning electric/hybrid vehicles to certain police activities such as crime scene investigation, speed checks, processing warrants, escorting, public affairs activities, staff travel, surveillance, inmate work crews, transporting detainees to court, and administrative use, alternative vehicles are more cost effective, practical and as safe as larger vehicles. At this time alternative vehicles are not considered capable of high speed pursuits, but that will change as new technology, such as electronically disabling devices are perfected and become available. Some departments responded to citizens concerns about high speed chases by changing their policies to require the pursuing vehicle stay within the speed limits, which all types of vehicles can do. In more and more communities, high speed pursuits are no longer allowed in densely populated areas. Radio and computer communications and basic enabling devices are found to be better choices for apprehension in these areas. Still the option of engaging in high speed chases is going to continue, requiring safer vehicles for the officers.

Regarding transporting prisoners to court or to work sites, policies do not support engaging these vehicles for pursuit. Our research was limited but we found only one department policy that

stated, "any vehicle with lights and communication equipment can be used for any purpose", with no mention of passengers. Hybrid and electric vehicles have been used and found acceptable for transporting work crews and detainees to court. Any vehicle can be fitted with protective screens between the driver and the passenger. Automatic locking systems are standard equipment on most vehicles.

The owners of Carbon Motors, a company in Atlanta, Georgia, is building the first vehicle designed solely for law enforcement. The company expects this vehicle to be available in 2012 and be cost competitive considering it's efficiency and built in safety measures. This vehicle appears to answers all the concerns previously expressed regarding alternative vehicles. According to the company, " the E7 is a 300 horse-powered bio-diesel fueled chaser, that will be faster and 'greener' than the standard Crown Victoria Police Interceptor." This vehicle is said to more than double the miles per gallon of current police vehicles.

Among the other stated advantages this company reported, "this vehicle will reach 60 mph in 6.5 seconds and has a maximum speed of one hundred and fifty five mph" and, "The E7 will come with integrated push bumpers which will give the vehicle the capability to perform PIT maneuvers, integrated emergency lights, spotlights, take down lights, and directional stick to ensure recognition at night. It will also be equipped with audio/video surveillance equipment as well as automobile license plate recognition system. Safety of officers is considered to be their major goal, stating, everything inside the vehicle is integrated into the cockpit just like a fighter aircraft or helicopter, so nothing is flying around in a crash situation and rear impact protection at 75 miles per hour. While this vehicle has not yet performed on the job, so to speak, it has gotten a great deal of attention and spiked interest in more efficient and better built law enforcement vehicles.

In 2009, after testing hybrid vehicles, the New York City police department added 40 more hybrids. In 2010 the city will have ordered two hundred Ford Fusion and Escape hybrid vehicles. Their fleet will also include the Altima, Nissan, and the Prius. The Nissan is expected to average 35 mpg, which is more than twice that of the Impala that averages 16 mpg and the Crown Victoria that averages around 12 mpg. Compared to the Altima, which can reach a speed of 60 miles per hour in 7.6 seconds, its fuel economy and made in America status, unlike the Crown Victoria made in Canada, the Altima and other hybrid vehicles are very attractive to law enforcement and for other governmental uses, such as sanitation, parks, schools districts, and general transportation. According to New York City administrators, switching to alternative vehicles including vans and buses, will save the city millions of dollars annually.

As our police and sheriff vehicles need to be replaced, alternative vehicles and fuels should be added to their fleet. Purchasing vehicles of all types through one contract should be cost effective as is the current arrangement to purchase fuels. Contracts for new vehicles should not prohibit purchasing or leasing alternative vehicles. Leasing is attractive as maintenance and repair or replacement are built into the contracts. Leasing also allows for newer vehicles on a regular basis that could better meet the needs of law enforcement.

Integrating alternative vehicles and fuels will have an immediate effect on fuel cost savings now and will continue to do so in the future This movement has been gaining attention in other

departments due to its significant cost saving without jeopardizing the safety of the officer or the public.

## **Training:**

Mergers of law enforcement agencies or programs such as officer training, are not unlike mergers of businesses. The goal is to have proactive leadership and greater productivity at less cost. However, there is one major difference. Profit is the goal of business. The goal of law enforcement is to protect people and their property, as well as business communities. Safe communities encourage businesses and manufacturers as well as local entrepreneurs to invest in our communities and create jobs that sustain budgets. Law enforcement is the backbone for making our communities safer and training is the foundation that it stands on.

Unlike the good old days when new officers were "shown the ropes" by senior officers, that practice has become unacceptable for a variety of very good reasons. Constant changes in curriculums and technology, increase in crimes, more sophisticated criminals, terrorist threats, cyber-crimes and constantly increase in law suits, make heavy demands on law enforcement. Training prepares officers for these changes.

There is no question that training is taken very seriously and fully supported by Sheriff Arnott and Chief Williams, their training directors and their staff. Both training directors diligently work to get the most out of their budgets and are excellent at improvising when funds are scarce. This is not a sustainable solution for providing the most advanced training available.

Support and cooperation between our two training directors is solid. Departments share information and to his credit, Chief Williams has designated a portion of their firing range for the Sheriff's department to use. He has also opened classes to other departments when space is available on a first ask basis for a fee if there are costs associated for the course, which is reasonable and fair.

According to Assistant City Manager, Collin Quigley, the city supported the concept of a regional training academy, but said the county did not have funds available for that to happen. He added that the city planners designed this facility for expansion. When asked if the city was planning for this facility to become a regional training academy, he did not confirm that to be the case, only saying that might be an option. He also mentioned that it could be available to the city for certain activities, for a fee, when not used by the police or fire departments.

Law enforcement is considered one of the most stressful occupations by those who work in it and those that study this profession. Studies have identified many stressors in police work and found that some can be more quickly addressed than others. When researchers asked law enforcement officers to share one cause of stress, officers across the country reported that requesting or responding to calls for assistance was highly stressful for them. Their major concern came from not knowing officers from other jurisdictions, their policies, practices and how well they were trained. By training together, officers from different departments have an opportunity to get better acquainted over a cup of coffee and to discuss issues during break time, and to partner with each other during training exercises. This has resulted in having more

confidence in the other officers, enhanced trust levels and camaraderie, a historically important factor in police work. Officers describe not knowing other officers as, "an unnecessary stressor, in an already stressful situation." They simply want to have some connection to the other officer(s) before having to deal with a serious situation that has the potential of resulting in violence. This is simple, reasonable, wise and doable. We owe this and nothing less to the men and women that protect us. This can be accomplished with a merger of training departments.

In, Deadly Force Encounter by Arlewohl & Christenson, published by Paladin Press, they describe police work using a quote made popular during the Vietnam War "War is a long stretch of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror," and they go on to say, "Days, weeks and even months can go by without even a hint of danger or high risk in any generated or dispatched call. However, we all know that the tables could turn at any given moment. The next radioed dispatch or street contact could present itself with a high-stress situation...but, it is these moments we must train to better prepare ourselves for our job and the threats that await us." They also addressed survival stress this way: "The effects of survival stress on the body is inevitable and can never be completely eliminated. However, with proper training and preparation, the effects can be minimized."

Reducing cost is a major factor in mergers, and often one of the costs saving measures taken is reducing administrative positions. We do not recommend this in the case of merging the training departments. Rather, we recommend co-directors position with a new job description, with specific responsibilities for each training directors.

We base this on the simple fact that we have two very qualified and highly motivated directors and that neither has sufficient time to do their best work. As an example, both mentioned that they regret not having enough time to work directly with a cadet that is having difficulty in one subject but does very well in the others. They are aware that people learn differently and at different rates. They also recognize the cost to their department and the emotional distress when a cadet like this drops out. Both stated that it has become more difficult and takes more time to recruit good cadets and believe that every means should be taken to graduate all possible cadets. Neither director opposed merging their department if it would be an asset to training.

All law enforcement officers must complete State mandated Police Officers Standard Training (POST). Both departments have "enhanced" courses in addition to the basic requirements of POST. Those courses must be included in budgets, or paid for by the offices themselves, which some may not be able to afford, lowering morale and perpetuating training inequity. All law enforcement officers have a right to expect the same quality of training as any other State certified officer. Not receiving equal training creates morale problems and often reduces effectiveness and loyalty. It is counterintuitive to spend large amounts of money to better train some officers than others and expect the same level of performance. If enhanced or expanded training is necessary for one department, it is necessary for all departments. We do not question the need for, or importance of enhanced training, we support it. But we do not support it being available only to those departments that can afford it, simply because their funding base is better. This is discrimination that is too risky to continue



While there is the notion that certain courses are "unique" to one department, that does not prove to be true. We question the differences in what one department does or could do that the other departments don't or can't do. Some crimes do occur more frequently, at this time, in the city than in the county. However, Sheriff Arnott has seen a steady change in this in the last few years, and predicts that with the continuing growth in Greene County this trend will continue to accelerate. Regardless of the crime and how frequently it occurs in one area or another, this should not be an issue where training is concerned. Wherever a crime is in progress or has been committed, the responding officer(s) should be equally prepared to respond and deal with the situation.

The idea that one department has "unique" needs that require unique training is false, and that notion should be viewed as a barrier to relationships between officers and departments. Criminal activity is borderless, and there is no class of crime that is unique to one area or the other. A criminal does not care where he/she commits the crime, only that they get what they want and are not caught.

Sheriff Hammond of Hamilton County, Tennessee, during a discussion on a possible merger of his department and Chattanooga Police Department stated, "There is not a dime's worth of difference between the sheriff's department and the Chattanooga Police Department in professionalism and training." This seems to speak to the issue of turf, egos and the quality of training of both departments.

Our interest in advocating for a merger of the training programs can be easily justified. We believe that it is essential to provide all law enforcement officers the same training, including "special" or "accelerated" training. A regional training academy has everything to do with equality of training and efficiency. Unfortunately the new city training facility will address only one segment of our law enforcement community, and possibly delay the building of a regional academy for a long time. Until we have a regional training academy, we will have officers receiving different levels of training yet expect them to have the same capabilities as the officers who's department can afford a more comprehensive training program.

What is wrong with this picture? Several things. Some officers will have fewer tools to draw on, will be less competitive when applying for promotion, and some officers will be taking greater risk than others. It fosters the notion that one department is better than the others, lowering morale of officers that receive only what their department can afford. A regional training academy can solve or significantly reduce these problems.

### **Summary:**

The Citizens Law Enforcement Merger Study Group was created for the purpose of addressing the possibility of a merger of the Springfield Police Department and the Greene County Sheriff Department. This group formed following the release of the Safety and Justice Roundtable's final report. To date this issue has not been seriously considered. While we applaud the Roundtable's insight as to the positive aspects of merging these departments, we do not agree that the police and sheriff's departments should be expected to produce a study of their respective departments. We suggest a study group that include several members with law

enforcement experience, educators, mental health professionals, fiscal managers and legal advisors be commissioned. Both the Chief and the Sheriff should serve as advisors to this group. Our review of a mergers is far from inclusive. Without staff or a funding source, our research had limitations. However, we believe we have produced a document that provides sufficient information to support the county and city commissioning a study of a full merger of the police and sheriff's departments.

Data supports that an increase in population is followed by an increase in crime. Like other communities, this community is experiencing major budget challenges while crime is increasing. The ongoing budget crisis has forced other communities to consider options, including mergers of law enforcement agencies, that might not have been considered in better economic times. Those that have implemented department mergers are finding that they made a good decision.

According to credible studies, regionalism has become more attractive and fiscally necessary as political leaders search for ways to maintain or improve services while cutting cost. But cost alone is not a sufficient reason for mergers. Studies indicate law enforcement departments do operate better after a merger, that in the short term savings can be minimal while efficiency increases almost immediately. In the long term savings significantly increase.

Lack of political will, taxpayer's emotions, and local control issues are viewed as major challenges to mergers. We know that Springfield and Greene County can resolve any roadblock that might appear, as has been the case in previous mergers that included the library systems, health departments, and just recent creation of the Public Safety Center, that will merge more than 70 federal, state, county and city agencies.

Combining law enforcement departments result in more efficient operations, work force flexibility, more comprehensive training, less turnover and a reduction of rivalry. Loyalty to a previous department is usually thought to cause problems and even become a major road block. This has not been proven to be a serious problem and, for the most part, soon forgotten. Communities that strongly supported their own police department, when given all the facts, were found to be more interested in efficiency and "taking care of the problem", than the colors of uniforms. While there might be numerous reasons thrown about for non support of a merger, with a well designed and fully implemented education program, both the officers and the citizens realized the benefit of merging, and like those living in communities that have merged wondered, as we should, "why didn't we do it sooner."

Attempting to convince taxpayers to accept something that is ill planned will continue to be rejected. But changes that are meaningful and result in more accountability and efficient use of tax payers money is a rational decision and would be difficult to reject.

One sheriff, after experiencing a successful merge, described the process as, "it's like trying to change a tire while traveling down a road at sixty miles an hour", but quickly added "it's well worth it." Considering the success the city and county have enjoyed from previous mergers one could compare the merger of these two departments as costing down a scenic Ozark county road with a tire that needs a little air.

John Gardner in "Power in Organizations" states, "Power is the basic energy needed to initiate and sustain action" or to put it another way he added, "the capacity to move forward now." We have the "power" to move forward with this merge. Justification for not going forward now because "we tried and failed" is another unnecessary barrier. Working toward improvements that are cost effective and serve the public better, should be on our political table at this time. We recognize that economics are not the same as four and six years ago. But that is precisely why this is not the time to back away from this proposal. When was there a better time, and why wasn't this on the political table then?

Every governmental agency is being forced to cut back, including law enforcement, when steadily going forward by supporting efficiency and safety, is a good part of the solution. Creative management and persistency, along with the will to change when that change, merger, produces a better "product" make sense.

There is a truism hanging on office walls, in the den or kitchen at home, and often given as gifts that has a subtle suggestion that says, "the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results." We have made an issue of a merge of these two departments over and over, and as of now have gotten the same results: nothing

Now is the time a recommendation made twenty-one years ago is taken off the shelf, given a good dusting and presented again, along with this group's recommendations to the decision makers of this extended community. It takes time to thoroughly study large mergers, but not twenty-one years. We must start now to do our homework to be ready when funding is found.

We are not advocating, at this time, for a full merger of these departments, although we firmly believe that is the direction this community should be going now. We do understand the complexity of mergers. For instance, legal issues have been given as the primary road block. However, the city and county have been very successful in merging other city and county departments and agencies over the years and are still successfully doing so now. We are asking for a study on a full merge, but, in the meantime suggesting, that there is good reason to consolidate training and purchasing now. We see no logical reason for this not to begin as soon as possible in order to take advantage of efficiency and elimination of inequity of training. It seems evident that the city has provided cost saving services to the county by allowing the county to use their fuel contracts.

Starting with a partial merge will smooth the path to a full merger, with less up-front cost at one time. This investment will demonstrate how government is committed to work for better services and more efficient operations, especially in times of economic stress. It makes sense to save money during these time, especially when these savings will only increase in future years,

We understand that there is political opposition to commissioning a full merge study and even for a partial merge by some. But that will change. The seriousness of the current economic climate is a powerful force for finding a more efficient way to protect our law enforcement community that protects us.

Data clearly supports that now is the time to start the merge process. Prolonging will only further stress budgets. We suggest that we start with a study of merging our two major law enforcement departments. More and more communities are making decisions to merge governmental departments, including law enforcement, and are glad they have. Perhaps a truism that states something like this, "making changes when needed is the definition of *sanity*," should be hanging on our walls as a constant reminder of how necessary it is to be proactive and prevent disasters. Every crime is a disaster. Every crime planned is a disaster waiting to happen.

We recommend and encourage policy makers to commission a study on a merger of the Springfield Police Department with the Greene County Sheriff Department now. The longer this study is delayed, the opportunity for immediate savings are also delayed. Both the city and county find funding for projects that are desirable, but not absolutely necessary, at any given time and the payback on these projects are often difficult to calculate, and my take years, but in the case of merging these departments the payback is seen immediately for various components of the merge and the long term payback is much shorter than many estimate.

Now is the time to focus on finding funding for something that is absolutely necessary. This is a different time and a very different economy, that many predict will only get worse. Unless we move in a different direction soon, that does not rely on cutting employment, less law enforcement protection and reduction in other necessary public services, our only choice is increasing taxes, only to dig ourselves into a deeper hole.

There are no quick fixes for the fiscal situation we are dealing with at this time. This merger is a sound, reasonable and doable option, that will play a significant role in meeting current, and long term, fiscal challenges, and certainly will benefit the public in keeping this community a safer environment for families and businesses. Even if the economy blooms in the near future, this merger address many other situations than just the economy. But, there is nothing wrong with saving money, even in good economic times

A secondary goal of this group is to encourage other citizen's groups to take the responsibility to study governmental issues of interest to them, and provide their work to government and community leaders also. As citizens it is our responsibility to do what ever possible to work for and with our elected officials.

We thank all of those who gave of their time to talk with us and provided valuable information, as well as sharing of their points of view. We also thank the Springfield News-Leader for providing an opportunity for citizens of the city and county to hold a discussion on merging our major law enforcement agencies.

Respectively submitted, Donna R. Bergen, Coordinator,

Dee Wampler	James Semple
Rick Headlee	Bill Johnson
Mike Ramon	David Zimmerman
Dennis Thompson	Tom Snow
Tommy Snow	Bill Hedrick

## **STUDY PARTICIPANTS:**

**Dee Wampler** receive a Bachelor of Science and Public Administration degree from the University of Missouri, and a Jurist Doctorate from the University of Missouri School of Law. He served Greene County as Prosecuting Attorney from 1962 through 1972 and currently has a practice.

Mr. Wampler has long served the community by participating in many boards and committees including , President of Greater Springfield Area Crime Stoppers, The Ozark Area Crime Prevention Council, Safety Council of the Ozarks, and received an Honorary Lifetime Membership from the Missouri Police Association for "distinguished service" His impressive history of lecturing and teaching is to numerous to list. He has written and published eleven books on criminal justice issues.

**Rick Headle** received a Bachelor of Science-Criminal Justice degree from Drury University, and has many hours of continuing education in criminal justice and law enforcement.

Lieutenant Hatley retired from the Springfield Police Department after twenty-five years of service. During his service he was assigned many duties including, preparing performance evaluations, was Sergeant of the Narcotics Unit- Special Investigator Section, proposed formulations of jail operation policy and was responsible for electronic surveillance equipment and training. He also was the departments representative to the Greene County Justice Center and held the position of acting Chief of the Springfield Police Department during their search for a permanent chief.

**Michael R. Ramon** is a graduate of the US Air Force Security Police Academy and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. He graduated from California State University-Sacramento with a Bachelor of Science degree, the University of Cincinnati with a Master of Criminal Justice and from Missouri State University with a Master of Social Work. He attended Harvard University- John F. Kennedy School of Government-Senior Executive Fellows Program and Georgetown University, "Seminar for Executive Operations." He is currently enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Nebraska,- Criminal Justice

Mr. Ramon served in the U.S. Air force assigned to the security police and in the United States Marshals Service from 1979, serving in many area as the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer in the Central District of California, responsible to the United States Attorney General. After retiring in 2003 he engaged in his own consultation business as President and Chief Investigator of Judicial Security Consulting, in Springfield, Missouri.

**Bill Johnson** lives in Mountain Grove Missouri. He served his community as mayor and on the school board. His interest in law enforcement is from a county perspective. Mr Johnson's family have resided in Greene County since 1869. He is in the cattle business.

**BILL Hendrick**. has a Bachelor degree in sociology from Park University, Kansas City, Missouri, and a Master of Science- Guidance & Counseling from Missouri State University.

He has an impressive history of continuing education, including Senior Government Managers Training, Brookings Institute, Washington D. C. Mr. Hendrick retired from the Federal Bureau of Prisons after thirty-one years of service. He held many positions during his service including, warden of several prisons, and Deputy Regional Director. He was warden of the Medical Center in Springfield, Missouri and Director of the Greene County Justice Center. He was an accredited auditor for the American Correctional Association-Adult Institutions.

**Tommy Snow** graduated from The American University, Washington D.C. with a Bachelor of Science - Administration of Justice degree. His continuing education included graduating from the Metropolitan Police Academy in Washington D.C. National Institute of Corrections, University of Colorado, Boulder in "Jail Management and Administration." attended "Gang Recognition, Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force in St. Louis.

Mr. Snow began his law enforcement as a police officer in the Metropolitan Police Department, Washington D.C. and promoted to Plain Clothes Investigator in narcotics and retired in 1998. He held the position of Adjunct Professor-Criminal Justice at Evangel University, Springfield, Missouri. He currently is a private consultant.

**James G. Semple** received an Associates Degree in Sociology and History from Santa Barbara City College, California. He accumulated an impressive list of specialists training during his military and civil service employment with the Department of Defense.

Mr. Semple joined the Canadian Army Corps before moving to the United States and joining the U.S. Air Force, where he served in the Military Police, followed by employment with the U.S. Department of Defense-Navy, where he provided research on procuring and disposal of Navy vehicles heavy equipment as well as ordering and racking parts. He also served in the California National Guard as a recruiter.

**David R. Zimmerman** received an Associate of Arts degree from Central Bible College. He accumulated more than 3,000 hours of advanced law enforcement training that include speciality seminars.

Mr. Zimmerman's law enforcement career included patrol officer, training officer, Greene County Sheriff's Department as Captain -Division Commander, Regional Training Coordinator for five counties in the Withlachooca, Florida, Police Training Academy, Hernando County, Florida Sheriff's Department-Deputy-K9 Handler, Detective, Chief of Police. And contracted with served communities in Missouri as Chief of Police for the purpose of reorganizing and starting police departments. He was co-founder the Springfield/Greene County Criminal Justice Association and served on the Springfield Police Department Crime Prevention Task force. After 26 years in law enforcement he retired and started his own private investigation service.

**Dennis R. Thompson** graduated from Drury University in 1978 with an Associate of Arts and a Bachelor of Science Degree. He has an impressive continuing education portfolio. Mr. Thompson served one tour of duty in South Viet Nam in 1969 - 1970. After his military service, Mr. Thompson was a patrol officer in Waynesville, Missouri, and the police department

of the City of St. Robert, Missouri, He held the ranks of patrol officer, sergeant, lieutenant, assistant chief, and chief.

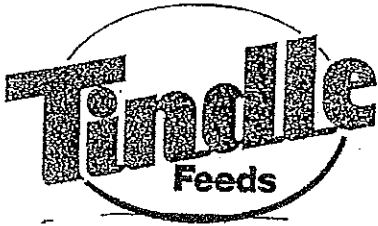
Following his work in St. Robert, he joined the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in 1980. His assignments included Academy Training Officer, field Training Officer, SWAT Officer, Detective- Forgery, Gang Intelligence-Enforcement, Emergency Management, and Homeland Security Bureau. During the twenty-seven he was employed by this department he became familiar with the process of the merger, including formula, the fiscal affairs committee, civil service rules and the Nevada Revised Statutes that approved this merge. He retired at the rank of Lieutenant in 2008

**Note:** The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is the result Of a merge of the City of Las Vegas Police Department with the Clark County Sheriff's Department in 1973. This merger is considered a model of fiscal responsibility and efficiency.

**Donna R. Bergen** graduated with a Bachelor of Arts-Social Work from Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas and Master of Social Work from The University of Kansas. Continuity education included achieving the highest licence for social work, LSCSW, selected as one of fifty correctional professionals to participate in a year program at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School-Strategic Management in Corrections Program and post graduate credits from the University of South Carolina-Criminal Justice.

Mrs. Bergen served on the board of the American Correctional Association, the committee that developed the original standards for accreditation for adult institutions, "Design Guide For Secure Corrections Facilities" which was published, and an was auditor for adult institutions. She began her correctional career at the Reception and Diagnostic Center in Topeka, Kansas, a facility that received all convicted male felons for evaluation and recommendation to the courts for incarceration or probation, held the position of classification director, special group therapist, and work release coordinator. She was social work field advisor for both state universities.

Mrs. Bergen was superintendent/warden of both male and female adult prisons, and Deputy Secretary of Corrections in Kansas. Her responsibilities in that position included insuring that all 11 jails in Kansas met State standard, responsible for the Probation department, as well the design, funding and implementation of two pre-release facilities that significantly reduced prison population during a time of crowding that was close to drawing attention from the Federal Courts. That project was completed and activated in a six month period. She submitted to the Justice Department a grant for a comprehensive study of community correction in Kansas, which was awarded. She frequently spoke at correctional conferences and directed work shops. After retiring she continued auditing for the American Correction Association for 6 years as well as private consulting for adult facilities that included the County of San Jose, California in their planning for a new jail,(6 weeks), South Carolina Department of Corrections training staff and correctional offices for transition to a co-correction facility, and the Missouri Department of Corrections concerning a federal lawsuit.



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11 December 1989

Mayor Thomas Carlson  
City Hall  
P.O. Box 8368  
Springfield, Missouri 65801

Dear Tom:

While listening to Don Busch's presentation at the Baron's Breakfast on Friday, December 1, some ideas occurred to me that I would like to share with you.

Tom, to some degree I feel I have earned the right to make constructive suggestions in that, as you know, I was the chairman of the fund-raising effort on the recent successful sales tax campaign. I also contributed to the last statewide fuel tax effort. We will be voting on an increase in our sewer taxes soon and I intend to support that campaign.

Statistics I have seen recently indicate that on a local, state, and federal basis, America is now spending a greater percentage of Gross National Product for government services than at any other time in our history. Honestly, I believe that those total government services are of greater quantity and quality than ever before. However, it requires constant diligence on the part of our representatives to keep from falling into the trap of looking at taxes as the first option in dealing with any challenge.

Frankly, I am concerned about the recommendation that our new police chief has made to council. I am sure he is an honorable man and probably needs the resources he asked for in order to do the comprehensive job he feels is needed and also the job that will get the results that he is expected to get. I see this as more of a political decision and one that council should come to grips with rather than our new chief of police.

What I am referring to is the opportunity to make far better use of the resources we are now providing city government. Specifically, I mean merging the police and fire departments and/or merging the Greene County Sheriff's Department and the Springfield Police Department. If my information is correct, we are spending approximately \$16 million for fire and police services. If we combined the two departments and called the employees Public Safety



Letter to Thomas Carlson  
11 December 1989  
Page 2 of 2

Officers, it is probable that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Public safety officers assigned to a specific fire district and station could report to work at that station and then patrol only within the district served by that station. In the event of a fire alarm, the patrolling officers could be notified immediately through their car radio to meet the fire fighting equipment at the location of the alarm and should be able to arrive as soon as the equipment. Under this program there would be no need to have more than the required number of equipment drivers at any fire station at any time other than for training purposes.

Obviously, the fire fighters union would not be overly excited about this proposal, but if Ronald Reagan could handle the air traffic controllers, surely we can deal with the local fire fighters union. In any event, we need to be looking for win/win equations and possibly we can pay our public safety officers more when their productivity improves, with all of us, the taxpayer, city government, and city employees being the winners.

The combining of county and city law enforcement has been successful in other parts of our state and country. We have halfheartedly talked about it for years, but no catalyst has existed to bring the idea to fruition. Perhaps the prospect of having to raise an additional \$2.5 million per year in taxes can be the jolt we need to get serious.

Tom, honestly, unless and until these ideas are given appropriate consideration by council, I personally will be adamantly opposed to any new taxes to fund the proposal made this past week by Chief Knowles. I would be happy to visit with you further about this suggestion if you see fit.

Respectfully yours,



J. Neal Ethridge

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P.S. The idea of increasing the utility bill "hidden tax" is so flawed, I will not comment further on that proposal.

cc Chief Knowles

# City-county consolidation would be long, difficult

Since December 2007, a group of community volunteers has been meeting regularly to study the criminal justice system in Springfield and Greene County. The Greene County Commission and the Springfield City Council has charged this group — named the Safety & Justice Roundtable — to independently analyze the inner workings of how our community addresses public safety, crime, law enforcement and the court system. The city and county face significant and increasing challenges in all these areas. We formed this group to gain an outsider's perspective on how to address these challenges. After concluding its study, the Roundtable will compile a report with its conclusions and recommendations. We are grateful to this group for its work and eager to review their report, which we expect within the next few months. Their findings will be made available to the public.

One idea the Roundtable has been exploring is the feasibility of combining services within Springfield Police Department and Greene County Sheriff's Office. Consolidating services within these and other city and county functions is a topic the Greene County Commission revisits often.

At first glance, it would seem logical that a significant cost savings may be realized by combining entities. Already, Emergency

Management, Public Health, Parks and Emergency 911 operate as joint city-county offices. These partnerships are very effective in cost and function.

Combining all county and city functions under a single metropolitan government, however, would be a long and complicated process, one much too broad to fully address in a single letter to the editor. I will, however, give a very brief outline of some of the major issues to consider.



Dave COONROD

Greene County's structure and functions, like those of all non-charter counties in Missouri, are defined by state statutes. Everything we do — from maintaining county roads to assessing property values to operating a jail — is mandated by the state. In contrast, the city of Springfield is self-governing, following specific functions defined by its City Charter, approved by city voters back in 1953. If the two entities were to combine, every detail of county and city government would have to be re-defined. We would also need to keep in mind the other municipalities in Greene County: Fair Grove, Ash Grove, Strafford, Republic, Walnut Grove, Willard, Battlefield and a portion of Rogersville — how would they fit into a municipal government?

Repealing the current City Charter and

combining the city and the county under a single government would require both a petition effort and countywide voter approval. This would be no small task. An effort in 1980 failed to gain voter approval. In 1990, a second petition drive fell short of required signatures.

Though Greene County maintains an excellent bond rating and very low debt ratio, members of the Safety & Justice Roundtable can attest that funding needs within our criminal justice system alone may exceed our resources. Criminal justice is but one of many complicated topics that would have to be addressed if all levels of city and county government combined.

Consolidation of various city and county services is clearly something the County Commission supports, when feasible, as illustrated by the city-county offices currently operating.

The County Commission is neither for nor against complete consolidation of city and county governments. That is for the voters of Springfield, Greene County and other municipalities to decide. We do, however, welcome further exploration of this topic, and we are available at any time to discuss this in detail with interested parties. Please contact the County Commission office at 868-4112 to schedule an appointment.

Dave Coonrod is presiding commissioner of Greene County.

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSION  
DAILY BRIEFING  
AMENDED (August 24, 2010)  
MEETING MINUTES

Date: Friday, August 20, 2010

Present: Dave Coonrod, Harold Bengsch, Roseann Bentley, Tim Smith, Chris Coulter, Jenny Edwards,  
Becky Jungmann, Jerry Moyer, Kathy McReynolds  
Visitor: Donna Bergen

Courts Administrator – Jerry Moyer

Jerry handed out his monthly report, jail population report, and a report on Division 25. The Jail population average for July was 530. The report on Division 25 gave running totals of civil cases filed, cases pending, hearings, and cases disposed. 642 cases are scheduled next week. So far Division 25 has disposed of 12,000 civil cases. Commissioner Bengsch pointed out that processing civil cases thru Division 25 has freed up time for the circuit court judges to work on other cases that in turn keeps the jail population down.

9-1-1 – Becky Jungmann

Becky spoke about incorporating the Republic dispatchers to the Springfield Call Center. She visited the Republic Call Center to observe and note procedures. There are differences between Springfield and Republic operations.

Other Items

Corrected paragraph: Donna Bergen joined the meeting for a discussion about merging City and County Law Enforcement. She is a member of a volunteer group of interested citizens called Citizens Law Enforcement Merge Study Group. They are researching the possibility and ramifications of such a merger.

Commissioner Bengsch explained how the City of Springfield and Greene County merged the Health Department over a 20-year period. It started with functional mergers of similar programs. Eventually city ordinances merged with the state laws that govern the County. He went on to say that the city and county are now looking at where we match on law enforcement issues. The pay scales are very different. The Library, Parks, and Environmental Advisory Board have successfully merged.

Donna expressed interest in learning more particulars and clarification of the legalities. Commissioner Coonrod said that information was included in the presentation he and John Housley gave to her group earlier this year. Dave mentioned that the Financial Advisory Board met this morning and spoke about the different economy we now have to work with and that funding is difficult. A full merger of the police and sheriff would best be achieved with a charter form of county government that can only be brought about by the community and legislative attention.

Donna stated that their purpose is to keep this issue current, and they realize that this is long-term process.

Harold explained that the Safety & Justice Roundtable suggested the City and County consider ways to cut costs thru cooperation. The SJR studied the local law enforcement system expecting to find better use of surplus funds. However, they found no surplus funds, and the funds that are available are being used efficiently. Sheriff and police chief are talking about areas for joint operation.

Commissioner Bentley assured Ms. Bergen that GC is working for the taxpayer's best interest and that information her group gets together would help GC.

Donna hopes for more discussion. She assured the Commissioners that her group is an advocate for the County. Their primary concern is for the best law enforcement for county.

Commissioner Bengsch asked Ms. Bergen what this community could do to stop the growth of crime. She agreed with the Commissioners that it starts in early childhood.

Merge

Law Enforcement Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Saturday, January 16, 2010

Midtown Carnegie Library

Donna Bergen called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Committee Members Present: Donna Bergen, Bill Johnson, Rick Headlee, Dave Iseman, Mike Ramon, Jim Semple, Dennis Thompson, Dee Wampler, and Bill Hedrick, Recorder.

County representatives present: David Coonrod, Presiding County Commissioner, John Housley, and the Honorable Dan Conklin.

City Representative: Greg Burris, City Manager.

Donna Bergen called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Dennis Thompson gave an overview of our group and that we were a group of citizens who have current and prior law enforcement experience who heeded the call of a News-Leader editorial for citizens to get involved to evaluate the feasibility of merging the Springfield Police Department (SPD) with the Greene County Sheriff's Department (GCSD). Dennis began by sharing his extensive experience with a "best practices" example of a success merger between the Las Vegas Police Department and the Clark County Sheriff's Office. Dennis was able to witness this merger and provided comments of pitfalls and eventual success.

John Housley, Attorney of the county was the first to speak and noted that Greene County, while urbanized, still had a significant rural contingency. His perception of the public is that the citizenry see the county more rural than urban and would, in all likelihood, have difficulty not seeing county deputies in their neighborhoods. He then made three statements regarding a merger:

1. There **ARE** legal and statutory issues to overcome with a merger. (Emphasis added)
2. The jail is a real problem for sheriffs throughout the state and stated that most of them have little, if any, training or understanding of corrections. He stated that the jail is a financial and legal liability to the county. This statement was confirmed by Mr. Burris. A brief discussion on why the county bears all the operating cost of the jail pursued and why the county bears all of the cost of the jail.
3. The county is in favor of cooperating with the city and willing to put "turf" issues aside.

County Commissioner Dave Coonrod then asked two questions:

1. What is our goal? (Of our group)
2. What do we hope to accomplish?

acknowledged the counties financial limitation and was pleased to announce that was not the case for the group which he repeated twice during the discussion. Mr. Burris asked our group if we thought the citizens could see any financial benefit from such a merger? Mr. Burris continued that while a merger may "look" good on the surface it is very hard to actually do. Both Mr. Burris and presiding commissioner Coonrod use the rational "if it's not broken why fix it". He also indicated that the city/county strategic planning committee is adding a chapter on "public safety" this coming year, but did not discuss its relevance to merging of the two departments..

Jim Simple asked about the feasibility of combining purchasing of fleet vehicles as well as the vehicle maintenance department and stated that the military had done so with very good success and saved a good deal of money. Mr. Burris indicated their fleet needed to be replaced but the funds were not available. Mr. Coonrod asked if Jim had visited the county maintenance shop and "who did you say you worked for". Jim responded the government. Commissioner Coonrod did not pursue the issue further including not answer Jim's question. Mr. Burris stated they did not have "enough funding" to operate their current fleet, let alone additional vehicles. Mr. Burris then stated he would answer Rick's (Headlee) question. "The city/county has no interest in a total merger...now or ever!"

Mike Ramon indicated that the city/county tactical training programs are very similar and that would appear to be an area they might be able to collaborate and save funds. Mike additionally stated the bulk of the operational costs of the jail fall on the county and it does not appear the city has that much "skin-in-the-game". Mr. Burris responded that the city has issued a self-imposed cap on the jail although he did not explain exactly what that meant. (can he do that? Judge Conklin told me the court is doing that)

Dee Wampler asked, "what 3 or 4 things should we "push" for. Mr. Burris directed us to read the final report of the Law Enforcement Safety and Justice Roundtable as the seven goals they came up with appear to be a very good approach. He specifically pointed out that merging city and county law enforcement was not identified by the task force as high priority.

Dave Coonrod stated we should look at how to go about getting "home rule" or charter form of (County) government instead of looking at merging law enforcement entities. John Housley and Judge Conklin then explained how a charter form of local government differs from what we currently have. It was pointed out that our group was primarily composed of individuals who had been, and in some cases still are, involved in criminal justice in one area or another, that led us to responding to the News-Leaders invitation to form a citizens study group on this topic. especially when the Law Enforcement Task Force in their concluding remarks in their report suggested that merge should be studied at some point, by another body. And, that it might be unlikely that this group had the expertise and interest to study and advocate for changing the legal status of the county.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

Bill Hedrick. Recorder

**“ The first problem for  
all of us,  
men and women,  
is not to learn  
but to unlearn.”**